

"LOGICIAN, METAPHYSICIAN, BARD!"
C. J. AMB.

COLERIDGE'S POEMS
WITH ESSAY BY

ALGERNON SWINBURNE.



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To

Miss Gemma Stormont

March 14th 1870



CHRISTABEL AND OTHER POEMS.



Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day spring
of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the
dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Lo-
gician, Metaphysician, Bard !

ESSAYS OF ELIA.

CHRISTABEL

*AND THE LYRICAL AND IMAGINATIVE
POEMS OF
S. T. COLERIDGE.*



ARRANGED AND INTRODUCED BY
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE,
AUTHOR OF *ATALANTA*, ETC., ETC.



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ESSAY ON COLERIDGE.

THE great man of whom I am about to speak seems to me a figure more utterly companionless, more incomparable with others, than any of his kind. Receptive at once and communicative of many influences, he has received from none and to none did he communicate any of those which mark him as a man memorable to all students of men. What he learnt and what he taught are not the precious things in him. He has founded no school of poetry, as Wordsworth has, or Byron, or Tennyson; happy in this, that he has escaped the plague of pupils and parodists. Has he founded a school of philosophy? He has helped men to think; he has touched their thought with passing colours of his own thought; but has he moved and moulded it into new and durable

shapes? Others may judge better of this than I, but to me, set beside the deep direct work of those thinkers who have actual power to break down and build up thought, to construct faith or destroy it, his work seems not as theirs is. And yet how very few are even the great names we could not better afford to spare, would not gladlier miss from the roll of "famous men and our fathers that were before us." Of his best verses I venture to affirm that the world has nothing like them, and can never have: that they are of the highest kind, and of their own. They are jewels of the diamond's price, flowers of the rose's rank, but unlike any rose or diamond known. In all times there have been gods that alighted and giants that appeared on earth; the ranks of great men are properly divisible, not into thinkers and workers, but into Titans and Olympians. Sometimes a supreme poet is both at once: such above all men is *Æschylus*; so also *Dante*, *Michel Angelo*, *Shakespeare*, *Milton*, *Goethe*, *Hugo*, are gods at once and giants; they have the lightning as well as the light of the world, and in hell they have command as in heaven; they can see in the night as by day. As godlike as these, even as the divinest of them, a poet such as *Coleridge* needs not the thews and organs of any Titan to make him greater. Judged by the justice of other men, he is assailable and condemnable on several sides; his good work is the scantiest in quantity ever done by a man so famous in so long a life; and much of his work is bad. His genius

is fluctuant and moonstruck as the sea is, and yet his mind is not, what he described Shakespeare's to be, "an oceanic mind." His plea against all accusers must be that of Shakespeare, a plea unanswerable :

"I am that I am; and they that level
At my abuses reckon up their own."

"I am that I am;" it is the only solid and durable reply to any impertinence of praise or blame. We hear too much and too often of circumstances or accidents that extenuate this thing or qualify that; there always may be; but usually—at least it seems so to me—we get out of each man what he has in him to give. Probably at no other time, under no other conditions, would Coleridge for example have done better work or more. His flaws and failures are as much ingrained in him as his powers and achievements.

For from the very first the two sides of his mind are visible and palpable. Among all verses of boys who were to grow up great, I remember none so perfect, so sweet and deep in sense and sound, as those which he is said to have written at school, headed "Time, Real and Imaginary." And following hard on these come a score or two of "poems," each more feeble and more flatulent than the last. Over these and the like I shall pass with all due speed, being undesirous to trouble myself or any possible reader with the question whether "Religious Musings" be more damnable than "Lines to a Young

Ass," or less damnable. Even when clear of these brambles, his genius walked for some time over much waste ground with irregular and unsure steps. Some poems, touched with exquisite grace, with clear and pure harmony, are tainted with somewhat of feeble and sickly which impairs our relish; "Lewti" for instance, an early sample of his admirable melody, of tender colour and dim grace as of clouds, but effeminate in build, loose hung, weak of eye and foot. Yet nothing of more precious and rare sweetness exists in verse than that stanza of the swans disturbed. His style indeed was a plant of strangely slow growth, but perfect and wonderful in its final flower. Even in the famous verses called "Love," he has not attained to that strength and solidity of beauty which was his special gift at last. For melody rather than for harmony it is perfect; but in this ænomel there is as yet more of honey than of wine.

Coleridge was the reverse of Antæus; the contact of earth took all strength out of him. He could not handle to much purpose any practical creed; his political verse is most often weak of foot and hoarse of accent. There is a graceful Asiatic legend cited by his friend Southey of "the footless birds of Paradise" who have only wings to sustain them, and live their lives out in a perpetual flight through the clearest air of heaven. Ancient naturalists, Cardan and Aldrovandus, had much dispute and dissertation as to the real or possible existence of these birds, as to whether the female did

in effect lay her eggs in a hollow of the male's back, designed by nature to that end ; whether they could indeed live on falling dew ; and so forth. These questions we may presume to be decided ; but it is clear and certain enough that men have been found to live in much this fashion. Such a footless bird of Paradise was Coleridge ; and had his wings always held out it had been well for him and us. Unhappily this winged and footless creature would perforce too often furl his wings in mid air and try his footing on earth, where his gait was like a swan's on shore.

Of his flight and his song when in the fit element, it is hard to speak at all, hopeless to speak adequately. It is natural that there should be nothing like them discoverable in any human work ; natural that his poetry at its highest should be, as it is, beyond all praise and all words of men. He who can define it could "unweave a rainbow ;" he who could praise it aright would be such another as the poet. The "Christabel," the "Kubla Khan," with one or two more, are outside all law and jurisdiction of ours. When it has been said that such melodies were never heard, such dreams never dreamed, such speech never spoken, the chief thing remains unsaid, and unspeakable. There is a charm upon these poems which can only be felt in silent submission of wonder. Any separate line has its own heavenly beauty, but to cite separate lines is intolerable. They are to be received in a rapture of silence ; such a silence as Chap-

man describes ; silence like a god "peaceful and young," which

" Left so free mine ears,
That I might hear the music of the spheres,
And all the angels singing out of heaven."¹

More amenable to our judgment, and susceptible of a more definite admiration, the "Ancient Mariner," and the few other poems cast in something of a ballad type which we may rank around or below it, belong to another class. The chief of these is so well known that it needs no fresh comment. Only I will say that to some it may seem as though this great sea-piece might have had more in it of the air and savour of the sea. Perhaps it is none the worse ; and indeed any one speaking of so great and famous a poem must feel and know that it cannot but be right, although he or another may think it would be better if this were retrenched or that appended. And this poem is beyond question one of the supreme triumphs of poetry. Witness the men who brought batteries to bear on it right and left. Literally : for one critic said that the "moral sentiment" had impaired the imaginative excellence ; another, that it failed and fell through for want of a moral foothold upon facts. Remembering these things, I am reluctant to proceed—but desirous to praise, as I best may. Though I doubt if it be worth while, seeing how

¹ *Euthymia Raptus ; The Tears of Peace* (1609).

the "Ancient Mariner"—praised or dispraised—lives and is like to live for the delight equally of young boys and old men; and seeing also that the last critic cited was no less a man than Hazlitt. It is fortunate—among many misfortunes—that for Coleridge no warning word was needed against the shriek of the press-gang from this side or that. He stooped once or twice to spurn them: but he knew that he stooped. His intense and overwrought abstraction from things of the day or hour did him no ill service here.

The "Ancient Mariner" has doubtless more of breadth and space, more of material force and motion, than anything else of the poet's. And the tenderness of sentiment which touches with significant colour the pure white imagination is here no longer morbid or languid, as in the earlier poems of feeling and emotion. It is soft and piteous enough, but womanly rather than effeminate; and thus serves indeed to set off the strange splendours and boundless beauties of the story. For the execution, I presume no human eye is too dull to see how perfect it is, and how high in kind of perfection. Here is not the speckless and elaborate finish which shows everywhere the fresh rasp of file or chisel on its smooth and spruce excellence; this is faultless after the fashion of a flower or a tree. Thus it has grown: not thus has it been carved.

Nevertheless, were we compelled to the choice, I for one would rather preserve "Kubla Khan" and "Christabel"

than any other of Coleridge's poems. It is more conceivable that another man should be born capable of writing the "Ancient Mariner" than one capable of writing these. The former is perhaps the most wonderful of all poems. In reading it we seem rapt into that paradise revealed to Swedenborg, where music and colour and perfume were one, where you could hear the hues and see the harmonies of heaven. For absolute melody and splendour it were hardly rash to call it the first poem in the language. An exquisite instinct married to a subtle science of verse has made it the supreme model of music in our language, a model unapproachable except by Shelley. All the elements that compose the perfect form of English metre, as limbs and veins and features a beautiful body of man, were more familiar, more subject as it were, to this great poet than to any other. How, for instance, no less than rhyme, assonance and alliteration are forces, requisite components of high and ample harmony, witness once for all the divine passage¹ which begins—

"Five miles meandering with a mazy motion," &c.

All these least details and delicacies of work are

¹ Witness also the matchless fragments of metrical criticism in Coleridge's "Remains," which prove with what care and relish the most sweet and perfect harmonist among all our poets would set himself to examine and explain the alternations and sequences of sound in the noblest verse of others.

worth notice when the result of them is so transcendent. Every line of the poem might be subjected to the like scrutiny, but the student would be none the nearer to the master's secret. The spirit, the odour in it, the cloven tongue of fire that rests upon its forehead, is a thing neither explicable nor communicable.

Of all Coleridge's poems the loveliest is assuredly "Christabel." It is not so vast in scope and reach of imagination as the "Ancient Mariner;" it is not so miraculous as "Kubla Khan;" but for simple charm of inner and outer sweetness it is unequalled by either. The very terror and mystery of magical evil is imbued with this sweetness; the witch has no less of it than the maiden; their contact has in it nothing dissonant or disfiguring, nothing to jar or to deface the beauty and harmony of the whole imagination. As for the melody, here again it is incomparable with any other poet's. Shelley indeed comes nearest; but for purity and volume of music Shelley is to Coleridge as a lark to a nightingale; his song heaven-high and clear as heaven, but the other's more rich and weighty, more passionately various, and warmer in effusion of sound.¹ On the other

¹ From this general rule I except of course the transcendent antiphonal music which winds up the "Prometheus" of Shelley, and should perhaps except also the "Ode to the West Wind," and the close of the "Ode to Naples." Against "Christabel" it would for example be fairer to set "The Sensitive Plant" for comparison of harmonies.

hand, the nobler nature, the clearer spirit of Shelley, fills his verse with a divine force of meaning, which Coleridge, who had it not in him, could not affect to give. That sensuous fluctuation of soul, that floating fervour of fancy, whence his poetry rose as from a shifting sea, in faultless completion of form and charm, had absorbed—if indeed there were any to absorb—all emotion of love or faith, all heroic beauty of moral passion, all inner and outer life of the only kind possible to such other poets as Dante or Shelley, Milton or Hugo. This is neither blameable nor regrettable; none of these could have done his work; nor could he have done it had he been in any way other or better than he was. Neither, for that matter, could we have had a Hamlet or a Faust from any of these, the poets of moral faith and passion, any more than a “*Divina Commedia*” from Shakespeare, a “*Prometheus Unbound*” from Goethe. Let us give thanks for each after their kind to nature and the fates.

Alike by his powers and his impotences, by his capacity and his defect, Coleridge was inapt for dramatic poetry. It were no discredit to have fallen short of Shelley on this side, to be overcome by him who has written the one great English play of modern times; but here the very comparison would seem a jest. There is little worth praise or worth memory in the “*Remorse*” except such casual fragments of noble verse as may readily be detached from the loose and friable stuff in which they lie

imbedded. In the scene of the incantation, in the scene of the dungeon, there are two such pure and precious fragments of gold. In the part of Alhadra there are lofty and sonorous interludes of declamation and reflection. The characters are flat and shallow; the plot is at once languid, violent, and heavy. To touch the string of the spirit, thread the web of evil and good, feel out the way of the soul through dark places of thought and rough places of action, was not given to this the sweetest dreamer of dreams. In "Zapolya" there are no such patches of imperial purple sewn on, but there is more of air and motion; little enough indeed of high dramatic quality, but a native grace and ease which give it something of the charm of life. In this lighter and more rapid work, the song of Glycine flashes out like a visible sunbeam; it is one of the brightest bits of music ever done into words.

The finest of Coleridge's odes is beyond all doubt the "Ode to France." Shelley declared it the finest of modern times, and justly, until himself and Keats had written up to it at least. It were profitless now to discuss whether it should take or yield precedence, when weighed with the "Ode to Liberty" or the "Ode to Naples." There is in it a noble and loyal love of freedom, though less fiery at once and less firm than Shelley's, as it proved in the end less durable and deep. The prelude is magnificent in music, and in sentiment and emotion far above any other of his poems, nor are

the last notes inadequate to this majestic overture. Equal in force and sweetness of style, the "Ode on Dejection" ranks next in my mind to this one; some may prefer its vaguer harmonies and sunset colours to the statelier movement, the more august and solemn passion of the earlier ode.¹

¹ Some time later, when France, already stript of freedom and violated by treason, was openly paraded in her prostitution to the first Buonaparte, Coleridge published his "Ode to Tranquillity," beginning with two stanzas since retrenched. Having unearthed them in the "Annual Register for 1801" (vol. xliii., p. 525) I set them down here as better worth saving than most of his political verse.

"What statesmen scheme, and soldiers work;
 Whether the Pontiff or the Turk
 Will e'er renew th' expiring lease
 Of empire; whether war or peace
 Will best play off the Consul's game;
 What fancy-figures, and what name,
 Half-thoughted, sensual France, a natural slave,
 On those ne'er-broken chains, her self-forg'd chains, will
 grave;

"Disturb[s] not me! Some tears I shed
 When bow'd the Swiss his noble head;
 Since then, with quiet heart have view'd
 Both distant fights and treaties crude,
 Whose heap'd-up terms, which fear compels,
 (Live Discord's green combustibles,
 And future fuel of the funeral pyre)
 Now hide, and soon, alas! will feed the low-burnt fire."

It is noticeable that only his supreme gift of lyrical power could sustain Coleridge on political ground. His attempts of the kind in blank verse are poor indeed :—

“ Untimely breathings, sick and short assays.”

Compare the nerveless and hysterical verses headed “Fears in Solitude” (exquisite as is the overture, faultless in tone and colour, and worthy of a better sequel) with the majestic and masculine sonnet of Wordsworth, written at the same time on the same subject : the lesser poet—for, great as he is, I at least cannot hold Wordsworth, though so much the stronger and more admirable man, equal to Coleridge as mere poet—speaks with a calm force of thought and resolution ; Coleridge wails, appeals, deprecates, objurgates in a flaccid and querulous fashion without heart or spirit. This debility of mind and manner is set off in strong relief by the loveliness of landscape touches in the same poem. The eclogue of “Fire, Famine, and Slaughter,” being lyrical, is worthier of a great name ; it has force and motion enough to keep it alive yet and fresh, impeded and trammelled though it usually be by the somewhat vain and verbose eloquence of a needlessly “Apologetic Preface.” Blank verse Coleridge could never handle with the security of conscious skill and a trained strength ; it grows in his hands too facile and feeble to carry the due weight or accomplish the due work. I have not found any of his poems in this metre retouched and re-invigorated as a few have been among his others. One

such alteration is memorable to all students of his art ; the excision from the " Ancient Mariner " of a stanza (eleventh of the Third Part) which described the Death-mate of the Spectre-Woman, his bones foul with leprous scurf and green corruption of the grave, in contrast to the red lips and yellow locks of the fearfuller Nightmare Life-in-Death. Keats in like manner cut off from the " Ode on Melancholy " a first stanza preserved for us by his biographer, who has duly noted the delicate justice of instinct implied by this rejection of all ghastly and violent images, however noble and impressive in their violence and ghastliness, from a poem full only of the subtle sorrow born of beauty. The same keen and tender sense of right made Coleridge reject from his work the horrors while retaining the terrors of death. But of his studies in blank verse he seems to have taken no such care. They remain mostly in a hybrid or an embryonic state, with birthmarks on them of debility or malformation. Two of these indeed have a charm of their own, not shallow or transient: the " Nightingale " and " Frost at Midnight." In colour they are perfect, and not (as usual) too effusive and ebullient in style. Others, especially some of the domestic or religious sort, are offensive and grievous to the human sense on that score. Coleridge had doubtless a sincere belief in his own sincerity of belief, a true feeling of his own truth of feeling ; but he leaves with us too often an unpleasant sense or taste—as it were a tepid dilution of sentiment, a rancid

unction of piety. A singular book published in 1835 without author's name, the work of some female follower, gives further samples of this in "Letters, Conversations and Recollections;" samples that we might well have spared.¹ A selection from his notes and remains, from his correspondence and the records of his "Table-Talk," even from such books as Cottle's and his anonymous disciples, would be of rare interest and value, if well edited, sifted and weeded of tares and chaff. The rare fragments of work done or speech spoken in his latter years are often fragments of gold beyond price. His plastic power and flexible charm of verse, though shown only in short flashes of song, lose nothing of the old freshness and life. To the end he was the same whose "sovereign sway and masterdom" of music could make sweet and strong even the feeble and tuneless form of metre called hexameters in English; if form of metre that may be called which has neither metre nor form. But the majestic rush and roll of that irregular

¹ It contains however among others one elaborate letter of some interest and significance, in which Coleridge, not without a tone of contempt, falls foul of the orthodox vulgarity of Wordsworth's theism ("what Hartley," his son, I presume, "calls the popping in of the old man with a beard") in a fashion showing how far apart his own theosophic mysticism, though never so daintily dressed up in cast church-clothes, had drifted from the more clear and rigid views of a harder and sounder mind.

anapæstic measure used once or twice by this supreme master of them all, no student can follow without an exultation of enjoyment. The "Hymn to the Earth" has a sonorous and oceanic strength of harmony, a grace and a glory of life, which fill the sense with a vigorous delight. Of such later work as the divine verses on "Youth and Age," "The Garden of Boccaccio," sun-bright and honey-sweet, "Work without Hope," (what more could be left to hope for when the man could already do such work?)—of these, and of how many more! what can be said but that they are perfect, flawless, priceless? Nor did his most delicate and profound power of criticism ever fail him or fall off. To the perfection of that rare faculty there were but two things wanting; self-command, and the natural cunning of words which has made many lesser men as strong as he was weak in the matter of verbal emendation. In that line of labour his hand was unsure and infirm. Want of self-command, again, left him often to the mercy of a caprice which swept him through tangled and tortuous ways of thought, through brakes and byways of fancy, where the solid subject in hand was either utterly lost and thrown over, or so transmuted and transfigured that any recognition of it was as hopeless as any profit. In an essay well worth translating out of jargon into some human language, he speaks of "the holy jungle of transcendental metaphysics." Out of that holy and pestilential jungle he emerged but too rarely into sunlight and clear air.

It is not depth of thought which makes obscure to others the work of a thinker ; real and offensive obscurity comes merely of inadequate thought embodied in inadequate language. What is clearly comprehended or conceived, what is duly thought and wrought out, must find for itself and seize upon the clearest and fullest expression. That grave and deep matter should be treated with the fluency and facility proper to light and slight things, no fool is foolish enough to desire : but we may at least demand that whatever of message a speaker may have for us be delivered without impediment of speech. A style that stammers and rambles and stumbles, that stagnates here, and there overflows into waste marsh relieved only by thick patches of powdery bulrush and such bright flowerage of barren blossom as is bred of the fogs and the fens—such a style gives no warrant of depth or soundness in the matter thus arrayed and set forth. What grains of truth or seeds of error were borne this way or that on the perpetual tide of talk concerning “ subject and object,” “ reason and understanding,” those who can or who care may at their leisure determine with the due precision. If to the man’s great critical and philosophic faculty there had been added a formative power as perfect as was added to his poetic faculty, the fruit might have been as precious after its kind. As it is, we must judge of his poetic faculty by what is accomplished ; of the other we must judge, not by what is accomplished, but by what is suggested. And the value

of this is great, though the value of that be small : so great indeed that we cannot weigh or measure its influence and its work.

Our study and our estimate of Coleridge cannot now be discoloured or misguided by the attraction or repulsion to which all contemporary students or judges of a great man's work cannot but be more or less liable. Few men, I suppose, ever inspired more of either feeling than he in his time did. To us his moral or social qualities, his opinion on that matter and his action in that, are nothing except in so far as they affect the work done, the inheritance bequeathed us. With all fit admiration and gratitude for the splendid fragments so bequeathed of a critical and philosophic sort, I doubt his being remembered, except by a small body of his elect, as other than a poet. His genius was so great, and in its greatness so many-sided, that for some studious disciples of the rarer kind he will doubtless, seen from any possible point of view, have always something about him of the old magnetism and magic. The ardour, delicacy, energy of his intellect, his resolute desire to get at the roots of things and deeper yet, if deeper might be, will always enchant and attract all spirits of like mould and temper. But as a poet his place is indisputable. It is high among the highest of all time. An age that should forget or neglect him might neglect or forget any poet that ever lived. At least, any poet whom it did remember such an age would remember as something other than a poet; it would

prize and praise in him, not the absolute and distinctive quality, but something empirical or accidental. That may be said of this one which can hardly be said of any but the greatest among men ; that come what may to the world in course of time, it will never see his place filled. Other and stronger men, with fuller control and concentration of genius, may do more service, may bear more fruit ; but such as his was they will not have in them to give. The highest lyric work is either passionate or imaginative ; of passion Coleridge's has nothing ; but for height and perfection of imaginative quality he is the greatest of lyric poets. This was his special power, and this is his special praise.

ALGERNON SWINBURNE.





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COLERIDGE'S POEMS.

CHRISTABEL.

PART I.

TIS the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing
cock ;
Tu—whit !——Tu—whoo !
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch ;
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour ;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud ;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark ?
The night is chilly, but not dark.

The thin grey cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full ;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is grey :
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late,
A furlong from the castle gate ?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight ;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak,
But moss and rarest misletoe :
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel !
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is, she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill ; the forest bare ;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak ?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl

From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel !
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there ?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone :
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare ;
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly !

Mary mother, save me now !
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou ?

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet :—
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness :
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear !
Said Christabel, How camest thou here ?

And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet:—

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine :
Five warriors seized me yestermorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white :
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be ;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced, I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke :
He placed me underneath this oak ;
He swore they would return with haste ;
Whither they went I cannot tell—
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand
And comforted fair Geraldine :
O well, bright dame ! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline ;
And gladly our stout chivalry

Will he send forth and friends withal
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel :
All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell ;
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth,
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well ;
A little door she opened straight,
All in the middle of the gate ;
The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched out.
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate :
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court : right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the Lady by her side ;
Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress !

Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,
I cannot speak for weariness.
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make !
And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :
For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will !
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying ;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
O softly tread, said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And, jealous of the listening air,
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death with stifled breath !
And now have reached her chamber door ;

And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet :
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.
The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !
It is a wine of virtuous powers ;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn ?
Christabel answered—Woe is me !
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the grey-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear ! that thou wert here !
I would, said Geraldine, she were !

But soon with altered voice, said she—
“ Off, wandering mother ! Peak and pine !
I have power to bid thee flee.”
Alas ! what ails poor Geraldine ?
Why stares she with unsettled eye ?
Can she the bodiless dead espy ?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
“ Off, woman, off ! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off ! 'tis given to me.”

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
Alas ! said she, this ghastly ride—
Dear lady, it hath wildered you !
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, “ 'Tis over now ! ”

Again the wild-flower wine she drank :
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright ;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel !
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself ; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.

Quoth Christabel, so let it be !
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close ;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around ;
Then drawing in her breath aloud
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast :
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold ! her bosom and half her side—
A sight to dream of, not to tell !
O shield her ! shield sweet Christabel !

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs ;
Ah ! what a stricken look was hers !
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay ;
Then suddenly as one defied
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the maiden's side !—
And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah well-a-day !
And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say :

In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow ;
 But vainly thou warrest,
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning,
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair :
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.

THE CONCLUSION TO PART I.

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree.
 Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows ;
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast ;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me !)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—

O sorrow and shame ! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree ?
And lo ! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine ! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine ! one hour was thine—
Thou'st had thy will ! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo ! tu—whoo !
Tu—whoo ! tu—whoo ! from wood and fell !
And see ! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance ;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft ; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes ; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright !
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light !
Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere ?
What if she knew her mother near ?

But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call :
For the blue sky bends over all !

PART II.

ACH matin bell, the Baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead :
These words Sir Leoline will say,
Many a morn to his dying day !

And hence the custom and law began,
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke—a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell !
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can !
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between.
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t'other,
The death-note to their living brother ;

And oft too, by the knell offended,
Just as their one ! two ! three ! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a merry peal from Borodale.

The air is still ! through mist and cloud
That merry peal comes ringing loud ;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed ;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
And nothing doubting of her spell
Awakens the lady Christabel.
“ Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel ?
I trust that you have rested well.”

And Christabel awoke and spied
The same who lay down by her side—
O rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree !
Nay, fairer yet ! and yet more fair !
For she belike hath drunken deep
Of all the blessedness of sleep !
And while she spake, her looks, her air
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seemed) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
“ Sure I have sinned !” said Christabel,
“ Now heaven be praised if all be well ! ”
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet
With such perplexity of mind
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown,
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom,
Enter the Baron's presence room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies,
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame !

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
And constancy lives in realms above ;
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain

And insult to his heart's best brother :
They parted—ne'er to meet again !
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
A dreary sea now flows between ;—
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face :
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage,
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
He would proclaim it far and wide
With trump and solemn heraldry,
That they who thus had wronged the dame,
Were base as spotted infamy !
“ And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney court—that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men !”
He spake : his eye in lightning rolls !
For the lady was ruthlessly seized ; and he kenned
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend !

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took

Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.
Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain !
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again—
(Ah, woe is me ! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid ! such sights to see ?)
Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound :
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest,
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light !

With new surprise,
“What ails then my beloved child ?”
The Baron said—His daughter mild
Made answer, “All will yet be well !”
I ween, she had no power to tell
Aught else : so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
As if she feared, she had offended

Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid !
And with such lowly tones she prayed,
She might be sent without delay
Home to her father's mansion.

“ Nay !

Nay, by my soul !” said Leoline.
“ Ho ! Bracy, the bard, the charge be thine !
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
And take two steeds with trappings proud,
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
And clothe you both in solemn vest,
And over the mountains haste along,
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
Detain you on the valley road.
And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
My merry bard ! he hastes, he hastes
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,
And reaches soon that castle good
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

“ Bard Bracy ! bard Bracy ! your horses are fleet,
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
More loud than your horses' echoing feet !
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall !
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
He bids thee come without delay
With all thy numerous array ;
And take thy lovely daughter home :
And he will meet thee on the way
With all his numerous array
White with their panting palfreys' foam :

And by mine honour ! I will say,
That I repent me of the day
When I spake words of fierce disdain
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine !—
—For since that evil hour hath flown,
Many a summer's sun hath shone ;
Yet ne'er found I a friend again
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing ;
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
His gracious hail on all bestowing !—
" Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
Are sweeter than my harp can tell ;
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
This day my journey should not be,
So strange a dream hath come to me ;
That I had vowed with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warned by a vision in my rest !
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—
Sir Leoline ! I saw the same
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wonder'd what might ail the bird ;
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the
old tree.

" And in my dream methought I went
To search out what might there be found ;

And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry ;
But yet for her dear lady's sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo ! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled around its wings and neck,
Green as the herbs on which it couched,
Close by the dove's its head it crouched ;
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers !
I woke ; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower ;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away—
It seems to live upon my eye !
And thence I vowed this self-same day,
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare,
Lest aught unholy loiter there.”

Thus Bracy said : the Baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile ;
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love ;
And said in courtly accents fine,
“ Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song,
Thy sire and I will crush the snake ! ”
He kissed her forehead as he spake,
And Geraldine, in maiden wise,
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine

She turned her from Sir Leoline ;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again ;
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couched her head upon her breast,
And looked askance at Christabel—
Jesu Maria, shield her well !

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread,
At Christabel she looked askance !—
One moment—and the sight was fled !
But Christabel in dizzy trance
Stumbling on the unsteady ground
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound ;
And Geraldine again turned round,
And like a thing, that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,
She rolled her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas ! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees—no sight but one !
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind ;
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate !
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,

Still picturing that look askance
With forced unconscious sympathy
Full before her father's view——
As far as such a look could be,
In eyes so innocent and blue !
And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused awhile, and inly prayed :
Then falling at the Baron's feet,
“ By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away ! ”
She said : and more she could not say :
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline ? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild ;
The same, for whom thy lady died !
O by the pangs of her dear mother
Think thou no evil of thy child !
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died :
Prayed that the babe for whom she died,
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride !
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline !
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine ?

Within the Baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.

His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
Dishonoured thus in his old age ;
Dishonoured by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the wrong'd daughter of his friend
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—
He rolled his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere—
“ Why, Bracy ! dost thou loiter here ?
I bade thee hence ! ” The bard obeyed ;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine !

THE CONCLUSION TO PART II.

A LITTLE child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always finds, and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light ;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other ;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty

At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true !)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.





KUBLA KHAN: OR, A VISION IN A DREAM.

A FRAGMENT.



N Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree :
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round :
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !
A savage place ! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon lover !
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced :
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :
And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever

It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war !

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves ;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.

It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw :
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.



THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

IN SEVEN PARTS.

PART I.

An ancient
Mariner
meeteth
three gal-
lants bidden
to a wedding-
feast, and de-
taineth one.



T is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three,
“By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?”

“The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin ;
The guests are met, the feast is set :
May'st hear the merry din.”

He holds him with his skinny hand,
“There was a ship,” quoth he.
“Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon !”
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The wedding-guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child :
The Mariner hath his will.

The wedding-guest sat on a stone :
He cannot choose but hear ;

The wedding
guest is spell-
bound by the
eye of the old
sea-faring
man, and
constrained
to hear his
tale.

And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the light house top.

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he !
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

And now the storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,

The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward
with a good
wind and fair
weather, till
it reached
the line.

The wedding
guest heareth
the bridal
music ; but
the mariner
continueth
his tale.

The ship
drawn by a
storm toward
the south
pole.

The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of
ice, and of
fearful
sounds where
no living
thing was to
be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around :
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound !

Till a great
sea-bird,
called the
Albatross,
camethrough
the snow-fog,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy and
hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steered us through !

And lo ! the
Albatross
proveth a
bird of good
omen, and
followeth the
ship as it re-
turned north-
wardthrough
fog and float-
ing ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner's hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine ;

Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.

“God save thee, ancient Mariner !
From the fiends, that plague thee thus !—
Why look’st thou so ?”—With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

The ancient
Mariner
inhospitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen.

PART II.

HE Sun now rose upon the right :
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners’ hollo !

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work ’em woe :
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow !

His ship-
mates cry out
against the
ancient Ma-
riner, for
killing the
bird of good
luck.

Nor dim nor red, like God’s own head,
The glorious Sun uprist :
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
’Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

But when the
fog cleared
off, they jus-
tify the same,
and thus
make them-
selves ac-
complices in
the crime.

The fair
breeze continues; the
ship enters
the Pacific
Ocean, and
sails north-
ward, even
till it reaches
the Line.
The ship
hath been
suddenly
becalmed.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free ;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be ;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Al-
batross be-
gins to be
avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink ;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plagued us so ;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

A spirit had followed them ; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls

nor angels ; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantino-
politan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no
climate or element without one or more.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root ;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah ! well-a-day ! what evil looks
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

The ship-mates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner : in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

PART III.

 HERE passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time ! a weary time !

How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist ;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
 And still it neared and neared :
 As if it dodged a water-sprite,
 It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer
 approach, it
 seemeth him
 to be a ship ;
 and at a dear
 ransom he
 freeth his
 speech from
 the bonds of
 thirst.

A flash of
 joy ;

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 We could nor laugh nor wail ;
 Through utter drought all dumb we stood !
 I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
 And cried, A sail ! a sail !

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 Agape they heard me call :
 Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
 And all at once their breath drew in,
 As they were drinking all.

And horror
 follows. For
 can it be a
 ship that
 comes on-
 ward without
 wind or tide ?

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
 Hither to work us weal ;
 Without a breeze, without a tide,
 She steadies with upright keel !

The western wave was all a-flame.
 The day was well nigh done !
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad bright Sun ;
 When that strange shape drove suddenly
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth
 him but the
 skeleton of a
 ship.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
 (Heaven's Mother send us grace !)
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
 With broad and burning face.

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
 How fast she nears and nears !

Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres ?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate ?
And is that Woman all her crew ?
Is that a Death ? and are there two ?
Is Death that woman's mate ?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold :
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice ;
" The game is done ! I've, I've won !"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out :
At one stride comes the dark ;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up !
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip !
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white ;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

And its ribs
are seen as
bars on the
face of the
setting Sun.
The spectre-
woman and
her death-
mate, and no
other on
board the
skeleton-
ship.

Like vessel,
like crew !

Death and
Life-in-
Death have
diced for the
ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) win-
neth the
ancient
Mariner.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
sun.

At the rising
of the Moon.

One after
another,

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His ship-
mates drop
down dead.

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death be-
gins her
work on the
ancient
Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe !
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow !

PART IV.

The wedding
guest feareth
that a spirit
is talking to
him.



FEAR thee, ancient Mariner !

I fear thy skinny hand !

And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.¹

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.”—

Fear not, fear not, thou wedding-guest !
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea !

But the an-
cient Ma-
riuer assur-
eth him of
his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to
relate his
horrible
penance.

¹ For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed.

And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful !
And they all dead did lie :
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on ; and so did I.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away ;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray ;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat ;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they :
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

But the curse
liveth for
him in the
eye of the
dead men.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high ;
But oh ! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye !
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and
fixedness he
yearneth towards the
journeying
Moon, and

the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward ; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide :
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread ;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light
of the Moon
he beholdeth
God's crea-
tures of the
great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam ; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty
and their
happiness.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware :
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

He blesseth
them in his
heart.

The spell
begins to
break

The selfsame moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

 H sleep! it is a gentle thing,
 Beloved from pole to pole!
 To Mary Queen the praise be given!
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
 That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
 That had so long remained,
 I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
 And when I awoke, it rained.

By grace of
 the holy
 Mother, the
 ancient
 Mariner is
 refreshed
 with rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
 I was so light—almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
 It did not come anear;
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

He heareth
 sounds and
 seeth strange
 sights and
 commotions
 in the sky
 and the
 element.

The upper air burst into life!
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 To and fro they were hurried about!
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge;
 And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
 The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side :
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag,
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
 the ship's
 crew are
 inspired, and
 the ship
 moves on ;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
 Yet now the ship moved on !
 Beneath the lightning and the moon
 The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
 It had been strange, even in a dream,
 To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on ;
 Yet never a breeze up blew ;
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
 Where they were wont to do ;
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
 We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
 Stood by me, knee to knee :
 The body and I pulled at one rope,
 But he said nought to me.

But not, by
 the souls of
 the men, nor
 by demons of
 earth or
 middle air,

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner !"
 Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !
 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,

Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast ;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun ;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

but by a
blessed troop
of angelic
spirits, sent
down by the
invocation of
the guardian
saint.

The lone-
some spirit
from the
south-pole
carries on
the ship as
far as the
line, in obe-
dience to the
angelic troop,
but still re-
quireth ven-
geance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid : and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean :
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound :
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar
Spirit's fel-
low demons,
the invisible
inhabitants
of the ele-
ment, take
part in his
wrong ; and
two of them
relate, one to
the other,
that penance
long and
heavy for the
ancient
Mariner
hath been
accorded to
the Polar
Spirit, who
returneth
southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

“ Is it he ? ” quoth one, “ Is this the man ?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

“ The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.”

The other was a softer voice,
 As soft as honey-dew :
 Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,
 And penance more will do."

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE.

BUT tell me, tell me! speak again,
 Thy soft response renewing—
 What makes that ship drive on so fast?
 What is the ocean doing?

SECOND VOICE.

Still as a slave before his lord,
 The ocean hath no blast ;
 His great bright eye most silently
 Up to the Moon is cast—
 If he may know which way to go ;
 For she guides him smooth or grim.
 See, brother, see! how graciously
 She looketh down on him.

FIRST VOICE.

But why drives on that ship so fast,
 Without or wave or wind?

SECOND VOICE.

The air is cut away before,
 And closes from behind.

The Mariner
 hath been
 cast into a
 trance ; for
 the angelic
 power
 causeth the
 vessel to
 drive north-
 ward faster

than human
life could en-
dure.

Fly, brother, fly ! more high, more high !
Or we shall be belated :
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.

The super-
natural mo-
tion is re-
tarded ; the
Mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather :
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high ;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter :
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away :
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is
finally ex-
piated.

And now this spell was snapt : once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head ;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made :
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—
 It mingled strangely with my fears,
 Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
 Yet she sailed softly too :
 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
 On me alone it blew.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
 The light-house top I see ?
 Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
 Is this mine own countree ?

And the an-
 cient Mari-
 ner behold-
 eth his na-
 tive country.

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
 And I with sobs did pray—
 O let me be awake, my God !
 Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
 So smoothly it was strewn !
 And on the bay the moonlight lay,
 And the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
 That stands' above the rock :
 The moonlight steeped in silentness
 The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,
 Till rising from the same,
 Full many shapes, that shadows were,
 In crimson colours came.

The angelic
 spirits leave
 the dead
 bodies.

And appear
in their own
forms of
light.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were :
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light ;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast :
Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :
It is the Hermit good !
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he maketh in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.



HIS Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears !
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

The Hermit
of the wood,

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump :
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk,
“ Why, this is strange, I trow !
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now ? ”

“ Strange, by my faith ! ” the Hermit said—
“ And they answered not our cheer !
The planks looked warped ! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere !
I never saw ought like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Approacheth
the ship with
wonder.

“ Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along ;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf’s young.”

“ Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)

I am a-feared"—"Push on, push on!"
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship
suddenly
sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient
Mariner is
saved in the
Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
"Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree,
 I stood on the firm land !
 The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
 And scarcely he could stand.

“ O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man ! ”
 The Hermit crossed his brow.
 “ Say quick,” quoth he, “ I bid thee say—
 What manner of man art thou ? ”

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
 With a woful agony,
 Which forced me to begin my tale ;
 And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
 That agony returns :
 And till my ghastly tale is told,
 This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land ;
 I have strange power of speech ;
 That moment that his face I see,
 I know the man that must hear me :
 To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door !
 The wedding-guests are there :
 But in the garden-bower the bride
 And bride-maids singing are :
 And hark the little vesper bell,
 Which biddeth me to prayer !

O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been
 Alone on a wide wide sea :

The ancient
 Mariner ear-
 nestly en-
 treateth the
 Hermit to
 shrieve him ;
 and the
 penance of
 life falls on
 him.

And ever and
 anon
 throughout
 his future
 life an agony
 constraineth
 him to travel
 from land to
 land.

So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

And to teach,
by his own
example, love
and rever-
ence to all
things that
God made
and loveth.



THE PAINS OF SLEEP.

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
It hath not been my use to pray
With moving lips or bended knees ;
But silently, by slow degrees,

My spirit I to Love compose,
In humble trust mine eye-lids close,
With reverential resignation,
No wish conceived, no thought exprest,
Only a sense of supplication ;
A sense o'er all my soul imprest
That I am weak, yet not unblest,
Since in me, round me, everywhere
Eternal strength and wisdom are.

But yester-night I prayed aloud
In anguish and in agony,
Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me :
A lurid light, a trampling throng,
Sense of intolerable wrong,
And whom I scorned, those only strong !
Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
Still baffled, and yet burning still !

Desire with loathing strangely mixed
On wild or hateful objects fixed.
Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!
And shame and terror over all!
Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
Which all confused I could not know,
Whether I suffered, or I did:
For all seemed guilt, remorse or woe,
My own or others still the same
Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame.

So two nights passed: the night's dismay
Saddened and stunned the coming day.
Sleep, the wide blessing, seemed to me
Distemper's worst calamity.
The third night, when my own loud scream
Had waked me from the fiendish dream,
O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,
I wept as I had been a child;
And having thus by tears subdued
My anguish to a milder mood,
Such punishments, I said, were due
To natures deepliest stained with sin,—
For aye entempesting anew
The unfathomable hell within
The horror of their deeds to view,
To know and loathe, yet wish and do!
Such griefs with such men well agree,
But wherefore, wherefore fall on me?
To be beloved is all I need,
And whom I love, I love indeed.

FRANCE. AN ODE.

I.



E Clouds! that far above me float and
pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may
control!

Ye Ocean-Waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye Woods! that listen to the night-birds singing,
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind!
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound!
O ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests high!
And O ye Clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising Sun! thou blue rejoicing Sky!
Yea, every thing that is and will be free!
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth and sea,

Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared !
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band :
And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The Monarchs marched in evil day,
And Britain joined the dire array ;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves
Had swol'n the patriot emotion
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves ;
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delayed and vain retreat !
For ne'er, O Liberty ! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame ;
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III.

“ And what,” I said, “ though Blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove !
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream !
Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light !”
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and
trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and bright ;
When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory ;
When, insupportably advancing,
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp ;

While timid looks of fury glancing,
Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,
Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore ;
Then I reproached my fears that would not flee ;
“And soon,” I said, “shall Wisdom teach her lore
In the low huts of them that toil and groan !
And, conquering by her happiness alone,
Shall France compel the nations to be free,
Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth their
own.”

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom ! O forgive those dreams !
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
From bleak Helvetia's icy cavern sent—
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams !
Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
With bleeding wounds ; forgive me, that I cherished
One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes !
To scatter rage, and traitorous guilt,
Where Peace her jealous home had built ;
A patriot-race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear ;
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—
O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils,
Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind ?
To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey ;
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn ; to tempt and to betray ?

v.

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain !
O Liberty ! with profitless endeavour
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour ;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the
waves !
And there I felt thee !—on that sea-cliff's verge,
Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze above,
Had made one murmur with the distant surge !
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty ! my spirit felt thee there.

February, 1797.

DEJECTION: AN ODE.

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.

BALLAD OF SIR PATRICK SPENS.

I.



TELL! If the Bard was weather-wise, who
made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick
Spence,

This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Eolian lute,
Which better far were mute.

For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!
And overspread with phantom light,
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread
But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
The coming on of rain and squally blast.
And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they
awed,
And sent my soul abroad,

Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and
live !

II.

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear—
O Lady ! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green :
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye !
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars ;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen :
Yon crescent Moon as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel how beautiful they are !

III.

My genial spirits fail ;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast ?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west :
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are
within.

IV.

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live :
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud !
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth,
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element !

V.

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be !
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.
Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms our ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

VI.

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
 This joy within me dallied with distress,
 And all misfortunes were but as the stuff

Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness :
 For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
 And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
 But now afflictions bow me down to earth :
 Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,
 But oh ! each visitation

Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
 My shaping spirit of Imagination.

For not to think of what I needs must feel,

But to be still and patient, all I can ;
 And haply by abstruse research to steal

From my own nature all the natural man—

This was my sole resource, my only plan :
 Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
 And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII.

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
 Reality's dark dream !

I turn from you, and listen to the wind,

Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
 Of agony by torture lengthened out

That lute sent forth ! Thou Wind, that ravest without,

Bare craig, or mountain-tairn,¹ or blasted tree,
 Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,

¹ Tairn is a small lake, generally if not always applied to the lakes up in the mountains, and which are the feeders of those in the valleys. This address to the Storm-wind will not appear extravagant to those who have heard it at night, and in a mountainous country.

Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
 Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
 Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
 Of dark brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
 Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
 The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.

Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
 Thou mighty Poet, e'en to frenzy bold!

What tell'st thou now about?

'Tis of the rushing of a host in rout,
 With groans of trampled men, with smarting
 wounds—

At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the
 cold!

But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!

And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
 With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—
 It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and
 loud!

A tale of less affright,

And tempered with delight,
 As Otway's self had framed the tender lay,

'Tis of a little child

Upon a lonesome wild,
 Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:
 And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
 And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother
 hear.

VIII.

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
 Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
 Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,
 And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,

May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
 Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth !
 With light heart may she rise,
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
 Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice ;
 To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
 Their life the eddying of her living soul !
 O simple spirit, guided from above,
 Dear Lady ! friend devoutest of my choice,
 Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.



ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.¹

Ἴοὺν, ἰοὺν, ὦ ὦ κακά.
 Ὑπ' αὖ μὲ δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος
 Στροβεῖ, ταρασσὼν φροιμίους ἐφημίους.
 * * * * *
 Τὸ μέλλον ἤξει. Καὶ σύ μ' ἐν τάχει παρὼν
 Ἄγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτεῖρας ἐρεῖς.
Æschyl. Agam. 1225.

I.



PIRIT who sweepst the wild harp of Time !
 It is most hard, with an untroubled ear
 Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear !
 Yet, mine eye fixed on Heaven's un-
 changing clime,

¹ This Ode was composed on the 24th, 25th, and 26th days of December, 1796 : and was first published on the last day of that year.

Long had I listened, free from mortal fear,
With inward stillness, and a bowed mind ;
When lo ! its folds far waving on the wind,
I saw the train of the departing Year !
Starting from my silent sadness
Then with no unholy madness
Ere yet the entered cloud foreclosed my sight,
I raised the impetuous song, and solemnized his flight.

II.

Hither, from the recent tomb,
From the prison's direr gloom,
From distemper's midnight anguish ;
And thence, where poverty doth waste and languish !
Or where, his two bright torches blending,
Love illumines manhood's maze ;
Or where o'er cradled infants bending
Hope has fixed her wishful gaze ;
Hither, in perplexed dance,
Ye Woes ! ye young-eyed Joys ! advance !

By Time's wild harp, and by the hand
Whose indefatigable sweep
Raises its fateful strings from sleep,
I bid you haste, a mixed tumultuous band !
From every private bower,
And each domestic hearth,
Haste for one solemn hour ;
And with a loud and yet a louder voice,
O'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,
Weep and rejoice !
Still echoes the dread name that o'er the earth
Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of Hell :
And now advance in saintly jubilee

Justice and Truth ! They too have heard thy spell,
They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty !

III.

I marked Ambition in his war-array !

I heard the mailed Monarch's troublous cry—

“ Ah ! wherefore does the Northern Conqueress stay !
Groans not her chariot on its onward way ? ”

Fly, mailed Monarch, fly !

Stunned by Death's twice mortal mace,

No more on murder's lurid face

The insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye !

Manes of the unnumbered slain !

Ye that gasped on Warsaw's plain !

Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,

When human ruin choked the streams,

Fell in conquest's gluttoned hour,

Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams !

Spirits of the uncoffined slain,

Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,

Oft, at night, in misty train,

Rush around her narrow dwelling !

The exterminating fiend is fled—

(Foul her life, and dark her doom)

Mighty armies of the dead

Dance, like death-fires, round her tomb !

Then with prophetic song relate,

Each some tyrant-murderer's fate !

IV.

Departing Year ! 'twas on no earthly shore

My soul beheld thy vision ! Where alone,

Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,

Aye Memory sits : thy robe inscribed with gore,

With many an unimaginable groan
 Thou storied'st thy sad hours ! Silence ensued,
 Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,
 Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories
 shone.

Then, his eye wild ardours glancing,
 From the choired gods advancing,
 The Spirit of the Earth made reverence meet,
 And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

v.

Throughout the blissful throng,
 Hushed were harp and song :
 Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads seven,
 (The mystic Words of Heaven)
 Permissive signal make :
 The fervent Spirit bowed, then spread his wings and
 spake !

“ Thou in stormy blackness throning
 Love and uncreated Light,
 By the Earth's unsolaced groaning,
 Seize thy terrors, Arm of might !
 By peace with proffered insult scared,
 Masked hate and envying scorn !
 By years of havoc yet unborn !
 And hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bared !
 But chief by Afric's wrongs,
 Strange, horrible, and foul !
 By what deep guilt belongs
 To the deaf Synod, ' full of gifts and lies !'
 By wealth's insensate laugh ! by torture's howl !
 Avenger, rise !
 For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,
 Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow ?

Speak! from thy storm-black Heaven O speak aloud!
 And on the darkling foe
 Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud!
 O dart the flash! O rise and deal the blow!
 The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries!
 Hark! how wide Nature joins her groans below!
 Rise, God of Nature! rise."

VI.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled;
 Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread.
 And ever, when the dream of night
 Renews the phantom to my sight,
 Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs;
 My ears throb hot; my eye-balls start;
 My brain with horrid tumult swims;
 Wild is the tempest of my heart;
 And my thick and struggling breath
 Imitates the toil of death!
 No stranger agony confounds
 The soldier on the war-field spread,
 When all foredone with toil and wounds,
 Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead!
 (The strife is o'er, the day-light fled,
 And the night-wind clamours hoarse!
 See! the starting wretch's head
 Lies pillowed on a brother's corse!)

VII.

Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,
 O Albion! O my mother Isle!
 Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,
 Glitter green with sunny showers;
 Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells

Echo to the bleat of flocks ;
 (Those grassy hills, those glittering dells
 Proudly ramparted with rocks)
 And Ocean mid his uproar wild
 Speaks safety to his island-child,
 Hence for many a fearless age
 Has social Quiet loved thy shore ;
 Nor ever proud invader's rage
 Or sacked thy towers, or stained thy fields with gore.

VIII.

Abandoned of Heaven ! mad avarice thy guide,
 At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—
 Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou hast stood,
 And joined the wild yelling of famine and blood !
 The nations curse thee ! They with eager wondering
 Shall hear Destruction, like a vulture, scream !
 Strange-eyed Destruction ! who with many a dream
 Of central fires through nether seas upthundering
 Soothes her fierce solitude ; yet as she lies
 By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
 If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes,
 O Albion ! thy predestined ruins rise,
 The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
 Muttering distempered triumph in her charmed sleep.

IX.

 Away, my soul, away !
 In vain, in vain the birds of warning sing—
 And hark ! I hear the famished brood of prey
 Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind !
 Away, my soul, away !
 I unpartaking of the evil thing,

With daily prayer and daily toil
 Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
 Have wailed my country with a loud Lament.
 Now I recentre my immortal mind
 In the deep sabbath of meek self-content ;
 Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim
 God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

ODE TO GEORGIANA, DUCHESS OF
 DEVONSHIRE,

ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH STANZA IN HER "PASSAGE
 OVER MOUNT GOTHARD."

"And hail the chapel! hail the platform wild!
 Where Tell directed the avenging dart,
 With well strung arm, that first preserved his child,
 Then aimed the arrow at the tyrant's heart."



PLENDOUR'S fondly fostered child!
 And did you hail the platform wild,
 Where once the Austrian fell
 Beneath the shaft of Tell!
 O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
 Whence learn'd you that heroic measure?

Light as a dream your days their circlets ran,
 From all that teaches brotherhood to Man
 Far, far removed! from want, from hope, from fear!
 Enchanting music lulled your infant ear,
 Obeisance, praises soothed your infant heart:

Emblasonments and old ancestral crests,
 With many a bright obtrusive form of art,
 Detained your eye from nature : stately vests,
 That veiling strove to deck your charms divine,
 Rich viands and the pleasurable wine,
 Were yours unearned by toil ; nor could you see
 The unenjoying toiler's misery.
 And yet, free Nature's uncorrupted child,
 You hailed the chapel and the platform wild,
 Where once the Austrian fell
 Beneath the shaft of Tell !
 O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !
 Whence learn'd you that heroic measure ?

There crowd your finely-fibred frame,
 All living faculties of bliss ;
 And Genius to your cradle came,
 His forehead wreathed with lambent flame,
 And bending low, with godlike kiss
 Breath'd in a more celestial life ;
 But boasts not many a fair compeer,
 A heart as sensitive to joy and fear ?
 And some, perchance, might wage an equal strife,
 Some few, to nobler being wrought,
 Corrivals in the nobler gift of thought.
 Yet these delight to celebrate
 Laurelled war and plumy state ;
 Or in verse and music dress
 Tales of rustic happiness—
 Pernicious tales ! insidious strains !
 That steel the rich man's breast,
 And mock the lot unblest,
 The sordid vices and the abject pains,
 Which evermore must be

The doom of ignorance and penury !
But you, free Nature's uncorrupted child,
You hailed the chapel and the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell !
O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !
Whence learn'd you that heroic measure ?

You were a mother ! That most holy name,
Which Heaven and Nature bless,
I may not vilely prostitute to those
Whose infants owe them less
Than the poor caterpillar owes
Its gaudy parent fly.
You were a mother ! at your bosom fed
The babes that loved you. You, with laughing eye,
Each twilight thought, each nascent feeling read,
Which you yourself created. Oh ! delight !
A second time to be a mother,
Without the mother's bitter groans :
Another thought, and yet another,
By touch, or taste, by looks or tones
O'er the growing sense to roll,
The mother of your infant's soul !
The Angel of the Earth, who, while he guides
His chariot-planet round the goal of day,
All trembling gazes on the eye of God,
A moment turned his awful face away ;
And as he viewed you, from his aspect sweet
New influences in your being rose,
Blest intuitions and communions fleet
With living Nature, in her joys and woes !
Thenceforth your soul rejoiced to see
The shrine of social Liberty !

O beautiful ! O Nature's child !
 'Twas thence you hailed the platform wild,
 Where once the Austrian fell
 Beneath the shaft of Tell !
 O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !
 Thence learn'd you that heroic measure.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.



HERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
 Where may the grave of that good man be?—
 By the side of a spring, on the breast of
 Helvellyn,

Under the twigs of a young birch tree !
 The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
 And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
 And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
 Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
 The Knight's bones are dust,
 And his good sword rust ;—
 His soul is with the saints, I trust.



SONG.

FROM REMORSE.



EAR, sweet spirit, hear the spell,
 Lest a blacker charm compel!
 So shall the midnight breezes swell
 With thy deep long-linging knell.

And at evening evermore,
 In a chapel on the shore,
 Shall the chaunter, sad and saintly,
 Yellow tapers burning faintly,
 Doleful masses chaunt for thee,
 Miserere Domine!

Hark! the cadence dies away
 On the quiet moonlight sea:
 The boatmen rest their oars and say,
 Miserere Domine!

GLYCINE'S SONG.

FROM ZAPOLYA.



SUNNY shaft did I behold,
 From sky to earth it slanted:
 And poised therein a bird so bold—
 Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted!

He sank, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled
 Within that shaft of sunny mist;
 His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,
 All else of amethyst!

And thus he sang : "Adieu ! adieu !
 Love's dreams prove seldom true.
 The blossoms, they make no delay :
 The sparkling dew-drops will not stay.
 Sweet month of May,
 We must away ;
 Far, far away !
 To day ! to day !"

CHORAL SONG.



Up ! ye dames, ye lasses gay !
 To the meadows trip away.
 'Tis you must tend the flocks this morn,
 And scare the small birds from the corn.
 Not a soul at home may stay :
 For the shepherds must go
 With lance and bow
 To hunt the wolf in the woods to-day.

Leave the hearth and leave the house
 To the cricket and the mouse :
 Find grannam out a sunny seat,
 With babe and lambkin at her feet.
 Not a soul at home may stay :
 For the shepherds must go
 With lance and bow
 To hunt the wolf in the woods to-day.

THEKLA'S SONG.

FROM PICCOLOMINI.



HE cloud doth gather, the greenwood roar,
The damsel paces along the shore;
The billows they tumble with might, with
 might;
And she flings out her voice to the darksome night;
 Her bosom is swelling with sorrow;
The world it is empty, the heart will die,
There's nothing to wish for beneath the sky:
Thou Holy One, call thy child away!
I've lived and loved, and that was to-day—
Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.

THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.



OF late, in one of those most weary hours,
When life seems emptied of all genial powers,
A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has known
May bless his happy lot, I sate alone;
And, from the numbing spell to win relief,
Call'd on the past for thought of glee or grief.
In vain! bereft alike of grief and glee,
I sate and cow'r'd o'er my own vacancy!
And as I watch'd the dull continuous ache,
Which, all else slumb'ring, seem'd alone to wake;
O Friend! long wont to notice yet conceal,
And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,

I but half saw that quiet hand of thine
Place on my desk this exquisite design,
Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,
The love, the joyaunce, and the gallantry !
An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,
Framed in the silent poesy of form.
Like flocks adown a newly-bathed steep
Emerging from a mist ; or like a stream
Of music soft that not dispels the sleep,
But casts in happier moulds the slumberer's dream,
Gazed by an idle eye with silent might
The picture stole upon my inward sight.
A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er my chest,
As though an infant's finger touch'd my breast.
And one by one (I know not whence) were brought
All spirits of power that most had stirr'd my thought
In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost
Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost ;
Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from above,
Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for love ;
Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan
Of manhood, musing what and whence is man !
Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-worn caves
Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds and waves ;
Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,
That call'd on Hertha in deep forest glades ;
Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's feast ;
Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and priest,
Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long array,
To high-church pacing on the great saint's day.
And many a verse which to myself I sang,
That woke the tear yet stole away the pang,
Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.
And best, a matron now, of sober mien,

Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,
Whom as a faery child my childhood woo'd
Even in my dawn of thought—Philosophy ;
Though then unconscious of herself, pardie,
She bore no other name than Poesy ;
And, like a gift from heaven, in life's glee,
That had but newly left a mother's knee,
Prattled and play'd with bird and flower, and stone
As if with elfin playfellows well known,
And life reveal'd to innocence alone.
Thanks, gentle artist ! now I can descry
Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,
And all awake ! And now in fix'd gaze stand,
Now wander through the Eden of thy hand ;
Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear
See fragment shadows of the crossing deer ;
And with that serviceable nymph I stoop
The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.
I see no longer ! I myself am there,
Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.
'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing strings,
And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings :
Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells
From the high tower, and think that there she dwells.
With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possest,
And breathe an air like life, that swells my chest.

The brightness of the world, O thou once free,
And always fair, rare land of courtesy !
O Florence ! with the Tuscan fields and hills,
And famous Arno, fed with all their rills ;
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy !
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.

Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old
And forests, where beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn ;
Palladian palace with its storied halls ;
Fountains, where Love lies listening to their falls ;
Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,
And Nature makes her happy home with man ;
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed
With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,
And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its head,
A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn ;—
Thine all delights, and every muse is thine ;
And more than all, the embrace and intertwine
Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance !
Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,
See ! Boccace sits, unfolding on his knees
The new-found roll of old Mæonides ;¹
But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,
Peers Ovid's holy book of Love's sweet smart !²

¹ Boccaccio claimed for himself the glory of having first introduced the works of Homer to his countrymen.

² I know few more striking or more interesting proofs of the overwhelming influence which the study of the Greek and Roman classics exercised on the judgments, feelings, and imaginations of the literati of Europe at the commencement of the restoration of literature, than the passage in the *Filocolo* of Boccaccio : where the sage instructor, Racheo, as soon as the young prince and the beautiful girl Biancifiore had learned their letters, sets them to study the Holy Book, Ovid's *Art of Love*. " *Incominciò Racheo a mettere il suo officio in esecuzione con intera sollecitudine. E loro, in breve tempo, insegnato a conoscer le lettere, fece leggere il santo libro d'Ovvidio, nel quale il sommo poeta nostra, come i santi fuochi di Venere si debbano ne' freddi cuori accendere.*"

O all-enjoying and all-blending sage,
 Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,
 Where, half conceal'd, the eye of fancy views
 Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all gracious to thy muse !

Still in thy garden let me watch their pranks,
 And see in Dian's vest between the ranks
 Of the trim vines, some maid that half believes
 The vestal fires, of which her lover grieves,
 With that sly satyr peeping through the leaves !

THE VISIONARY HOPE.



AD lot, to have no hope ! Though lowly
 kneeling

He fain would frame a prayer within his breast,
 Would fain entreat for some sweet breath of
 healing,

That his sick body might have ease and rest ;
 He strove in vain ! the dull sighs from his chest
 Against his will the stifling load revealing,
 Though Nature forced ; though like some captive guest,
 Some royal prisoner at his conqueror's feast,
 An alien's restless mood but half concealing,
 The sternness on his gentle brow confessed,
 Sickness within and miserable feeling :
 Though obscure pangs made curses of his dreams,
 And dreaded sleep, each night repelled in vain,
 Each night was scattered by its own loud screams :
 Yet never could his heart command, though fain,
 One deep full wish to be no more in pain.

That Hope, which was his inward bliss and boast,
 Which waned and died, yet ever near him stood,
 Though changed in nature, wander where he would—
 For Love's despair is but Hope's pining ghost!
 For this one hope he makes his hourly moan,
 He wishes and can wish for this alone!
 Pierced, as with light from Heaven, before its gleams
 (So the love-stricken visionary deems)
 Disease would vanish, like a summer shower,
 Whose dews fling sunshine from the noon-tide bower!
 Or let it stay! yet this one Hope should give
 Such strength that he would bless his pains and live.

THE BLOSSOMING OF THE SOLITARY DATE TREE. A LAMENT.

I.

BENEATH the blaze of a tropical sun the
 mountain peaks are the thrones of frost,
 through the absence of objects to reflect the
 rays. "What no one with us shares, seems
 scarce our own." The presence of a one,

The best belov'd, who loveth me the best,

is for the heart, what the supporting air from within is
 for the hollow globe with its suspended car. Deprive
 it of this, and all without, that would have buoyed it
 aloft even to the seat of the gods, becomes a burthen
 and crushes it into flatness.

II.

The finer the sense for the beautiful and the lovely, and the fairer and lovelier the object presented to the sense; the more exquisite the individual's capacity of joy, and the more ample his means and opportunities of enjoyment, the more heavily will he feel the ache of solitariness, the more unsubstantial becomes the feast spread around him. What matters it, whether in fact the viands and the ministering graces are shadowy or real, to him who has not hand to grasp nor arms to embrace them?

III.

Imagination; honourable aims;
Free commune with the choir that cannot die;
Science and song; delight in little things,
The buoyant child surviving in the man;
Fields, forests, ancient mountains, ocean, sky,
With all their voices—O dare I accuse
My earthly lot as guilty of my spleen,
Or call my destiny niggard! O no! no!
It is her largeness, and her overflow,
Which being incomplete, disquieteth me so!

IV.

For never touch of gladness stirs my heart,
But tim'rously beginning to rejoice
Like a blind Arab, that from sleep doth start
In lonesome tent, I listen for thy voice.
Beloved! 'tis not thine; thou art not there!
Then melts the bubble into idle air,
And wishing without hope I restlessly despair.

V.

The mother with anticipated glee
 Smiles o'er the child, that, standing by her chair
 And flatt'ning its round cheek upon her knee,
 Looks up, and doth its rosy lips prepare
 To mock the coming sounds. At that sweet sight
 She hears her own voice with a new delight ;
 And if the babe perchance should lisp the notes aright,

VI.

Then is she tenfold gladder than before !
 But should disease or chance the darling take,
 What then avail those songs, which sweet of yore
 Were only sweet for their sweet echo's sake ?
 Dear maid ! no prattler at a mother's knee
 Was e'er so dearly prized as I prize thee :
 Why was I made for Love and Love denied to me ?

A DAY DREAM.



Y eyes make pictures, when they are shut :—
 I see a fountain, large and fair,
 A willow and a ruined hut,
 And thee, and me and Mary there.
 O Mary ! make thy gentle lap our pillow !
 Bend o'er us, like a bower, my beautiful green willow !

A wild-rose roofs the ruined shed,
 And that and summer well agree :

And lo ! where Mary leans her head,
Two dear names carved upon the tree !
And Mary's tears, they are not tears of sorrow :
Our sister and our friend will both be here to-morrow.

'Twas day ! But now few, large, and bright
The stars are round the crescent moon !
And now it is a dark warm night,
The balmiest of the month of June !
A glow-worm fallen, and on the marge remounting
Shines and its shadow shines, fit stars for our sweet
fountain.

O ever—ever be thou blest !
For dearly, Asra, love I thee !
This brooding warmth across my breast,
This depth of tranquil bliss—ah me !
Fount, tree and shed are gone, I know not whither,
But in one quiet room we three are still together.

The shadows dance upon the wall,
By the still dancing fire-flames made ;
And now they slumber, moveless all !
And now they melt to one deep shade !
But not from me shall this mild darkness steal thee :
I dream thee with mine eyes, and at my heart I feel thee !

Thine eyelash on my cheek doth play—
'Tis Mary's hand upon my brow !
But let me check this tender lay
Which none may hear but she and thou !
Like the still hive at quiet midnight humming,
Murmur it to yourselves, ye two beloved women !

YOUTH AND AGE.



VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine ! Life went a maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young !

When I was young ?—Ah, woful when !
Ah ! for the change 'twixt Now and Then !
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly then it flashed along :—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide !
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely ; Love is flower-like ;
Friendship is a sheltering tree ;
O ! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old !

Ere I was old ? Ah, woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here !
O Youth ! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that Thou art gone !
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd :—
And thou wert aye a masker bold !

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
 Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
 Bloom, O ye amaranths ! bloom for whom ye may,
 For me ye bloom not ! Glide, rich streams, away !
 With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll :
 And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul ?
 Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
 And hope without an object cannot live.

THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN.¹

ENCINCTURED with a twine of leaves,
 That leafy twine his only dress !
 A lovely Boy was plucking fruits,
 By moonlight, in a wilderness.

The moon was bright, the air was free,
 And fruits and flowers together grew
 On many a shrub and many a tree :
 And all put on a gentle hue,
 Hanging in the shadowy air
 Like a picture rich and rare.
 It was a climate where, they say,
 The night is more beloved than day.
 But who that beauteous Boy beguil'd,
 That beauteous Boy to linger here ?
 Alone, by night, a little child,
 In place so silent and so wild—
 Has he no friend, no loving mother near ?

¹ Portion of a projected poem with the above title..

LOVE'S APPARITION AND EVANISHMENT.

AN ALLEGORIC ROMANCE.



IKE a lone Arab, old and blind
 Some caravan had left behind
 Who sits beside a ruin'd well,
 Where the shy sand-asps bask and swell;
 And now he hangs his aged head aslant,
 And listens for a human sound—in vain!
 And now the aid, which Heaven alone can grant,
 Upturns his eyeless face from Heaven to gain;—
 Even thus, in vacant mood, one sultry hour,
 Resting my eye upon a drooping plant,
 With brow low bent, within my garden bower,
 I sate upon the couch of camomile;
 And—whether 'twas a transient sleep, perchance,
 Flitted across the idle brain, the while
 I watch'd the sickly calm with aimless scope,
 In my own heart; or that, indeed a trance,
 Turn'd my eye inward—thee, O genial Hope,
 Love's elder sister! thee did I behold,
 Drest as a bridesmaid, but all pale and cold,
 With roseless cheek, all pale and cold and dim
 Lie lifeless at my feet!
 And then came Love, a sylph in bridal trim,
 And stood beside my seat;
 She bent, and kissed her sister's lips,
 As she was wont to do;—
 Alas! 'twas but a chilling breath
 Woke just enough of life in death
 To make Hope die anew.

COMPLAINT AND REPROOF.

COMPLAINT.



OW seldom, friend! a good great man inherits

Honour or wealth, with all his worth and pains!

It sounds like stories from the land of spirits,

If any man obtain that which he merits,

Or any merit that which he obtains.

REPROOF.

For shame, dear friend! renounce this canting strain!

What wouldst thou have a good great man obtain?

Place—titles—salary—a gilded chain—

Or throne of corses which his sword hath slain?

Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends;

Hath he not always treasures, always friends,

The good great man? three treasures, love, and light,

And calm thoughts, regular as infant's breath;—

And three firm friends, more sure than day and night—

Himself, his Maker, and the angel Death.

HUMAN LIFE,

ON THE DENIAL OF IMMORTALITY.



F dead, we cease to be; if total gloom

Swallow up life's brief flash for aye, we
fare

As summer-gusts, of sudden birth and doom,

Whose sound and motion not alone declare,

But are their whole of being! If the breath
Be life itself, and not its task and tent,
If even a soul like Milton's can know death;
O Man! thou vessel purposeless, unmeant,
Yet drone-hive strange of phantom purposes!

Surplus of nature's dread activity,
Which, as she gazed on some nigh-finished vase,
Retreating slow, with meditative pause,

She formed with restless hands unconsciously!
Blank accident! nothing's anomaly!

If rootless thus, thus substanceless thy state,
Go, weigh thy dreams, and be thy hopes, thy fears,
The counter-weights!—Thy laughter and thy tears

Mean but themselves, each fittest to create,
And to repay the other! Why rejoices

Thy heart with hollow joy for hollow good?

Why cowl thy face beneath the mourner's hood,
Why waste thy sighs, and thy lamenting voices,

Image of image, ghost of ghostly elf,
That such a thing as thou feel'st warm or cold?
Yet what and whence thy gain, if thou withhold

These costless shadows of thy shadowy self?
Be sad! be glad! be neither! seek, or shun!
Thou hast no reason why! Thou canst have none;
Thy being's being is contradiction.

PHANTOM.



ALL look and likeness caught from earth,
All accident of kin and birth,
Had pass'd away. There was no trace
Of aught on that illumined face,
Uprais'd beneath the rifted stone
But of one spirit all her own;—
She, she herself, and only she,
Shone thro' her body visibly.

PSYCHE.



THE butterfly the ancient Grecians made
The soul's fair emblem, and its only name—
But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade
Of mortal life!—For in this earthly frame
Ours is the reptile's lot, much toil, much blame,
Manifold motions making little speed,
And to deform and kill the things whereon we feed.

FANCY IN NUBIBUS.

OR THE POET IN THE CLOUDS.



IT is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you
please!
Or let the easily persuaded eyes

Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
 Of a friend's fancy; or with head bent low
 And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
 'Twixt crimson banks; and then, a traveller, go
 From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
 Or list'ning to the tide, with closed sight,
 Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
 By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
 Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
 Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

THE HOMERIC HEXAMETER DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED.



STRONGLY it bears us along in swelling and
 limitless billows,
 Nothing before and nothing behind but the
 sky and the ocean.

THE OVIDIAN ELEGIAC METRE DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED.



N the hexameter rises the fountain's silvery
 column;
 In the pentameter aye falling in melody
 back.

THE VISIT OF THE GODS.

IMITATED FROM SCHILLER.

EVER, believe me,
Appear the Immortals,
Never alone :
Scarce had I welcomed the sorrow-beguiler,
Iacchus ! but in came boy Cupid the smiler ;
Lo ! Phœbus the glorious descends from his throne !
They advance, they float in, the Olympians all !
With divinities fills my
Terrestrial hall !

How shall I yield you
Due entertainment,
Celestial quire ?
Me rather, bright guests ! with your wings of upbuoyance
Bear aloft to your homes, to your banquets of joyance,
That the roofs of Olympus may echo my lyre !
Hah ! we mount ! on their pinions they waft up my soul !
O give me the nectar !
O fill me the bowl !
Give him the nectar !
Pour out for the poet,
Hebe ! pour free !
Quicken his eyes with celestial dew,
That Styx the detested no more he may view,
And like one of us Gods may conceit him to be !
Thanks, Hebe ! I quaff it ! Io Pæan, I cry !
The wine of the Immortals
Forbids me to die !

ON A CATARACT

FROM A CAVERN NEAR THE SUMMIT OF A
MOUNTAIN PRECIPICE.

STROPHE.



UNPERISHING youth !
 Thou leapest from forth
 The cell of thy hidden nativity ;
 Never mortal saw
 The cradle of the strong one ;
 Never mortal heard
 The gathering of his voices ;
 The deep-murmured charm of the son of the rock,
 That is lisp'd evermore at his slumberless fountain,
 There's a cloud at the portal, a spray-woven veil
 At the shrine of his ceaseless renewing ;
 It embosoms the roses of dawn,
 It entangles the shafts of the noon,
 And into the bed of its stillness
 The moonshine sinks down as in slumber,
 That the son of the rock, that the nursling of heaven
 May be born in a holy twilight !

ANTISTROPHE.

The wild goat in awe
 Looks up and beholds
 Above thee the cliff inaccessible ;—
 Thou at once full-born
 Madd'nest in thy joyance,
 Whirlest, shatter'st, splitt'st,
 Life invulnerable.

HYMN TO THE EARTH.

HEXAMETERS.



EARTH! thou mother of numberless children,
 the nurse and the mother,
 Hail! O Goddess, thrice hail! Blest be thou!
 and, blessing, I hymn thee!
 Forth, ye sweet sounds! from my harp, and my voice
 shall float on your surges—
 Soar thou aloft, O my soul! and bear up my song on
 thy pinions.
 Travelling the vale with mine eyes—green meadows and
 lake with green island,
 Dark in its basin of rock, and the bare stream flowing
 in brightness,
 Thrilled with thy beauty and love in the wooded slope
 of the mountain,
 Here, great mother, I lie, thy child, with his head on
 thy bosom!
 Playful the spirits of noon, that rushing soft through thy
 tresses,
 Green-haired goddess! refresh me; and hark! as they
 hurry or linger,
 Fill the pause of my harp, or sustain it with musical
 murmurs,
 Into my being thou murmurest joy, and tenderest sad-
 ness
 Shedd'st thou, like dew, on my heart, till the joy and
 the heavenly sadness
 Pour themselves forth from my heart in tears, and the
 hymn of thanksgiving.

Earth ! thou mother of numberless children, the nurse
and the mother,
Sister thou of the stars, and beloved by the sun, the
rejoicer !
Guardian and friend of the moon, O Earth, whom the
comets forget not,
Yea, in the measureless distance wheel round and again
they behold thee !
Fadeless and young (and what if the latest birth of
creation ?)
Bride and consort of Heaven, that looks down upon thee
enamoured !
Say, mysterious Earth ! O say, great mother and god-
dess,
Was it not well with thee then, when first thy lap was
ungirdled,
Thy lap to the genial Heaven, the day that he wooed thee
and won thee !
Fair was thy blush, the fairest and first of the blushes
of morning !
Deep was the shudder, O Earth ! the throe of thy self-
retention :
Inly thou strovest to flee, and didst seek thyself at thy
centre !
Mightier far was the joy of thy sudden resilience ; and
forthwith
Myriad myriads of lives teemed forth from the mighty
embrace.
Thousand-fold tribes of dwellers, impelled by thousand-
fold instincts,
Filled, as a dream, the wide waters ; the rivers sang on
their channels ;

Laughed on their shores the hoarse seas ; the yearning
 ocean swelled upward ;
 Young life lowed through the meadows, the woods, and
 the echoing mountains,
 Wandered bleating in valleys, and warbled on blossoming
 branches.

CATULLIAN HENDECASYLLABLES.



EAR, my beloved, an old Milesian story !—
 High, and embosom'd in congregated laurels,
 Glimmer'd a temple upon a breezy headland ;
 In the dim distance amid the skiey billows
 Rose a fair island ; the god of flocks had plac'd it.
 From the far shores of the bleak resounding island
 Oft by the moonlight a little boat came floating,
 Came to the sea-cave beneath the breezy headland,
 Where amid myrtles a pathway stole in mazes
 Up to the groves of the high embosom'd temple.
 There in a thicket of dedicated roses,
 Oft did a priestess, as lovely as a vision,
 Pouring her soul to the son of Cytherea,
 Pray him to hover around the slight canoe-boat,
 And with invisible pilotage to guide it
 Over the dusk wave, until the mighty sailor
 Shivering with ecstasy sank upon her bosom.

LOVE.



ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve ;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve !

She lean'd against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight ;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve !
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand ;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined : and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace ;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face !

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight !

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land ;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain ;—

And that she nursed him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay ;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve ;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride ;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIE.

A FRAGMENT.



ENEATH yon birch with silver bark,
And boughs so pendulous and fair,
The brook falls scatter'd down the rock :
And all is mossy there !

And there upon the moss she sits,
The Dark Ladie in silent pain ;
The heavy tear is in her eye,
And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page
Up the castled mountain's breast,
If he might find the Knight that wears
The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,
And she had lingered there all day,
Counting moments, dreaming fears—
O wherefore can he stay?

She hears a rustling o'er the brook,
She sees far off a swinging bough!
" 'Tis He! 'Tis my betrothed Knight!
Lord Falkland, it is Thou! "

She springs, she clasps him round the neck,
She sobs a thousand hopes and fears,
Her kisses glowing on his cheeks
She quenches with her tears.

* * * * *

" My friends with rude ungentle words
They scoff and bid me fly to thee!
O give me shelter in thy breast!
O shield and shelter me!

" My Henry, I have given thee much,
I gave what I can ne'er recall,
I gave my heart, I gave my peace,
O Heaven! I gave thee all."

The Knight made answer to the Maid,
While to his heart he held her hand,
" Nine castles hath my noble sire,
None statelier in the land.

“The fairest one shall be my love’s,
The fairest castle of the nine !
Wait only till the stars peep out,
The fairest shall be thine :

“Wait only till the hand of eve
Hath wholly closed yon western bars,
And through the dark we two will steal
Beneath the twinkling stars !”—

“The dark? the dark? No! not the dark?
The twinkling stars? How, Henry? How?
O God! ’twas in the eye of noon
He pledged his sacred vow !

“And in the eye of noon, my love,
Shall lead me from my mother’s door,
Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white
Strewing flowers before :

“But first the nodding minstrels go
With music meet for lordly bow’rs,
The children next in snow-white vests,
Strewing buds and flow’rs !

“And then my love and I shall pace,
My jet black hair in pearly braids,
Between our comely bachelors
And blushing bridal maids.”

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LEWTI,

OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT.



T midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti ! from my mind
Depart ; for Lewti is not kind.

The Moon was high, the moonlight gleam
And the shadow of a star
Heaved upon Tamaha's stream ;
But the rock shone brighter far,
The rock half sheltered from my view
'By pendent boughs of tressy yew—
So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
Gleaming through her sable hair.
Image of Lewti ! from my mind
Depart ; for Lewti is not kind.
I saw a cloud of palest hue,
Onward to the moon it passed ;
Still brighter and more bright it grew,
With floating colours not a few,
Till it reached the moon at last :
Then the cloud was wholly bright,
With a rich and amber light !
And so with many a hope I seek,
And with such joy I find my Lewti ;
And even so my pale wan cheek
Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty !
Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind,
If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
Away it goes ; away so soon ?
Alas ! it has no power to stay :
Its hues are dim, its hues are grey—
Away it passes from the moon !
How mournfully it seems to fly,
Ever fading more and more,
To joyless regions of the sky—
And now 'tis whiter than before !
As white as my poor cheek will be,
When, Lewti ! on my couch I lie,
A dying man for love of thee.
Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapour in the sky,
Thin, and white, and very high ;
I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud :
Perhaps the breezes that can fly
Now below and now above,
Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
Of Lady fair—that died for love.
For maids, as well as youths, have perished
From fruitless love too fondly cherished.
Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush ! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks for ever :
Like echoes to a distant thunder,
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread,
And startle from their reedy bed.

O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.
I know the place where Lewti lies,
When silent night has closed her eyes :
It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head :
Voice of the night! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread,
And creep, like thee, with soundless tread,
I then might view her bosom white
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently swelling wave.

Oh! that she saw me in a dream,
And dreamt that I had died for care ;
All pale and wasted I would seem,
Yet fair withal, as spirits are !
I'd die indeed, if I might see
Her bosom heave, and heave for me !
Soothe, gentle image! soothe my mind!
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

THE THREE GRAVES.

A FRAGMENT OF A SEXTON'S TALE.



HE grapes upon the Vicar's wall
Were ripe as ripe could be ;
And yellow leaves in sun and wind
Were falling from the tree.

On the hedge-elms in the narrow lane
Still swung the spikes of corn :
Dear Lord ! it seems but yesterday—
Young Edward's marriage-morn.

Up through that wood behind the church,
There leads from Edward's door
A mossy track, all over boughed,
For half a mile or more.

And from their house-door by that track
The bride and bridegroom went ;
Sweet Mary, though she was not gay,
Seemed cheerful and content.

But when they to the church-yard came,
I've heard poor Mary say,
As soon as she stepped into the sun,
Her heart it died away.

And when the Vicar joined their hands,
Her limbs did creep and freeze ;
But when they prayed, she thought she saw
Her mother on her knees.

And o'er the church-path they returned—
I saw poor Mary's back,
Just as she stepped beneath the boughs
Into the mossy track.

Her feet upon the mossy track
The married maiden set :
That moment—I have heard her say—
She wished she could forget.

The shade o'er-flushed her limbs with heat—
Then came a chill like death :
And when the merry bells rang out,
They seemed to stop her breath.

Beneath the foulest mother's curse
No child could ever thrive :
A mother is a mother still,
The holiest thing alive.

So five months passed : the mother still
Would never heal the strife ;
But Edward was a loving man,
And Mary a fond wife.

“ My sister may not visit us,
My mother says her nay :
O Edward ! you are all to me,
I wish for your sake I could be
More lifesome and more gay.

“ I'm dull and sad ! indeed, indeed
I know I have no reason !

Perhaps I am not well in health,
And 'tis a gloomy season."

'Twas a drizzly time—no ice, no snow !
And on the few fine days
She stirred not out, lest she might meet
Her mother in the ways.

But Ellen, spite of miry ways
And weather dark and dreary,
Trudged every day to Edward's house,
And made them all more cheery.

Oh ! Ellen was a faithful friend,
More dear than any sister !
As cheerful too as singing lark ;
And she ne'er left them till 'twas dark,
And then they always missed her.

And now Ash-Wednesday came—that day
But few to church repair :
For on that day you know we read
The Commination prayer.

Our late old Vicar, a kind man,
Once, Sir, he said to me,
He wished that service was clean out
Of our good liturgy.

The mother walked into the church—
To Ellen's seat she went :
Though Ellen always kept her church
All church-days during Lent.

And gentle Ellen welcomed her
With courteous looks and mild :
Thought she "what if her heart should melt,
And all be reconciled !"

The day was scarcely like a day—
The clouds were black outright :
And many a night, with half a moon,
I've seen the church more light.

The wind was wild ; against the glass
The rain did beat and bicker ;
The church-tower swinging over head,
You scarce could hear the Vicar !

And then and there the mother knelt,
And audibly she cried—
" Oh ! may a clinging curse consume
This woman by my side !

O hear me, hear me, Lord in Heaven,
Although you take my life—
O curse this woman, at whose house
Young Edward woo'd his wife.

By night and day, in bed and bower,
O let her cursed be !"
So having prayed, steady and slow,
She rose up from her knee,
And left the church, nor e'er again
The church-door entered she.

I saw poor Ellen kneeling still,
So pale, I guessed not why :

When she stood up, there plainly was
A trouble in her eye.

And when the prayers were done, we all
Came round and asked her why :
Giddy she seemed, and sure, there was
A trouble in her eye.

But ere she from the church-door stepped
She smiled and told us why :
“ It was a wicked woman’s curse,”
Quoth she, “ and what care I ? ”

She smiled, and smiled, and passed it off
Ere from the door she stept—
But all agree it would have been
Much better had she wept.

And if her heart was not at ease,
This was her constant cry—
“ It was a wicked woman’s curse—
God’s good, and what care I ? ”

There was a hurry in her looks,
Her struggles she redoubled :
“ It was a wicked woman’s curse,
And why should I be troubled ? ”

These tears will come—I dandled her
When ’twas the merest fairy—
Good creature ! and she hid it all :
She told it not to Mary.

But Mary heard the tale : her arms
Round Ellen’s neck she threw ;

“ O Ellen, Ellen, she cursed me,
And now she hath cursed you ! ”

I saw young Edward by himself
Stalk fast adown the lee,
He snatched a stick from every fence,
A twig from every tree.

He snapped them still with hand or knee,
And then away they flew !
As if with his uneasy limbs
He knew not what to do !

You see, good sir ! that single hill ?
His farm lies underneath :
He heard it there, he heard it all,
And only gnashed his teeth.

Now Ellen was a darling love
In all his joys and cares :
And Ellen's name and Mary's name
Fast-linked they both together came,
Whene'er he said his prayers.

And in the moment of his prayers
He loved them both alike :
Yea, both sweet names with one sweet joy
Upon his heart did strike !

He reach'd his home, and by his looks
They saw his inward strife :
And they clung round him with their arms,
Both Ellen and his wife.

And Mary could not check her tears,
So on his breast she bowed ;

Then frenzy melted into grief,
And Edward wept aloud.

Dear Ellen did not weep at all,
But closelier did she cling,
And turned her face and looked as if
She saw some frightful thing.

PART IV.¹

To see a man tread over graves
I hold it no good mark ;
'Tis wicked in the sun and moon,
And bad luck in the dark !

You see that grave ? The Lord he gives,
The Lord he takes away :
O Sir ! the child of my old age
Lies there as cold as clay.

Except that grave, you scarce see one
That was not dug by me ;
I'd rather dance upon 'em all
Than tread upon these three !

“ Ay, Sexton ! 'tis a touching tale.”
You, Sir ! are but a lad ;
This month I'm in my seventieth year,
And still it makes me sad.

And Mary's sister told it me,
For three good hours and more ;
Though I had heard it, in the main,
From Edward's self before.

¹ Of this poem there are no parts I. and II. existing in verse ;
they were only projected in prose.

Well ! it passed off ! the gentle Ellen
Did well nigh dote on Mary ;
And she went oftener than before,
And Mary loved her more and more :
She managed all the dairy.

To market she on market-days,
To church on Sundays came ;
All seemed the same : all seemed so, Sir !
But all was not the same !

Had Ellen lost her mirth ? Oh ! no !
But she was seldom cheerful ;
And Edward looked as if he thought
That Ellen's mirth was fearful.

When by herself, she to herself
Must sing some merry rhyme ;
She could not now be glad for hours,
Yet silent all the time.

And when she soothed her friend, through all
Her soothing words 'twas plain
She had a sore grief of her own,
A haunting in her brain.

And oft she said, I'm not grown thin !
And then her wrist she spanned ;
And once when Mary was down-cast,
She took her by the hand,
And gazed upon her, and at first
She gently pressed her hand ;

Then harder, till her grasp at length
Did gripe like a convulsion !

Alas ! said she, we ne'er can be
Made happy by compulsion !

And once her both arms suddenly
Round Mary's neck she flung,
And her heart panted, and she felt
The words upon her tongue.

She felt them coming, but no power
Had she the words to smother ;
And with a kind of shriek she cried,
" Oh Christ ! you're like your mother ! "

So gentle Ellen now no more
Could make this sad house cheery ;
And Mary's melancholy ways
Drove Edward wild and weary.

Lingering he raised his latch at eve,
Though tired in heart and limb :
He loved no other place, and yet
Home was no home to him.

One evening he took up a book,
And nothing in it read ;
Then flung it down, and groaning cried,
" Oh ! Heaven ! that I were dead."

Mary looked up into his face,
And nothing to him said ;
She tried to smile, and on his arm
Mournfully leaned her head.

And he burst into tears, and fell
Upon his knees in prayer :
" Her heart is broke ! O God ! my grief,
It is too great to bear ! "

'Twas such a foggy time as makes
Old sextons, Sir! like me,
Rest on their spades to cough; the spring
Was late uncommonly.

And then the hot days, all at once,
They came, we knew not how:
You looked about for shade, when scarce
A leaf was on a bough.

It happened then ('twas in the bower
A furlong up the wood:
Perhaps you know the place, and yet
I scarce know how you should,—)

No path leads thither, 'tis not nigh
To any pasture-plot;
But clustered near the chattering brook,
Lone hollies marked the spot.

Those hollies of themselves a shape
As of an arbour took,
A close, round arbour; and it stands
Not three strides from a brook.

Within this arbour, which was still
With scarlet berries hung,
Were these three friends, one Sunday morn
Just as the first bell rung.

'Tis sweet to hear 'a brook, 'tis sweet
To hear the Sabbath-bell,
'Tis sweet to hear them both at once,
Deep in a woody dell.

His limbs along the moss, his head
Upon a mossy heap,
With shut-up senses, Edward lay :
That brook e'en on a working day
Might chatter one to sleep.

And he had passed a restless night,
And was not well in health ;
The women sat down by his side,
And talked as 'twere by stealth.

" The sun peeps through the close thick leaves,
See, dearest Ellen ! see !
'Tis in the leaves, a little sun,
No bigger than your ee ;

" A tiny sun, and it has got
A perfect glory too ;
Ten thousand threads and hairs of light,
Make up a glory, gay and bright,
Round that small orb, so blue."

And then they argued of those rays,
What colour they might be ;
Says this, " They're mostly green ;" says that,
" They're amber-like to me."

So they sat chatting, while bad thoughts
Were troubling Edward's rest ;
But soon they heard his hard quick pants,
And the thumping in his breast.

" A mother too !" these self-same words
Did Edward mutter plain :
His face was drawn back on itself,
With horror and huge pain.

Both groaned at once, for both knew well
 What thoughts were in his mind;
 When he waked up, and stared like one
 That hath been just struck blind.

He sat upright; and ere the dream
 Had had time to depart,
 "O God, forgive me! (he exclaimed)
 I have torn out her heart."

Then Ellen shrieked, and forthwith burst
 Into ungentle laughter;
 And Mary shivered, where she sat,
 And never she smiled after.

*Carmen reliquum in futurum tempus relegatum. To-morrow!
 and To-morrow! and To-morrow!—*

ALICE DU CLOS: OR THE FORKED TONGUE.

A BALLAD.



HE Sun is not yet risen,
 But the dawn lies red on the dew:
 Lord Julian has stolen from the hunters
 away,
 Is seeking, Lady, for you.
 Put on your dress of green,
 Your buskins and your quiver;
 Lord Julian is a hasty man,
 Long waiting brook'd he never.

I dare not doubt him, that he means
To wed you on a day,
Your lord and master for to be,
And you his lady gay.
O Lady! throw your book aside!
I would not that my Lord should chide."

Thus spake Sir Hugh the vassal knight,
To Alice, child of old Du Clos,
As spotless fair, as airy light
As that moon-shiny doe,
The gold star on its brow, her sire's ancestral crest!
For ere the lark had left his nest,
She in the garden bower below
Sate loosely wrapt in maiden white,
Her face half drooping from the sight,
A snow-drop on a tuft of snow!
O close your eyes, and strive to see
The studious maid, with book on knee,—
Ah! earliest-open'd flower;
While yet with keen unblunted light
The morning star shone opposite
The lattice of her bower—
Alone of all the starry host,
As if in prideful scorn
Of flight and fear he stay'd behind,
To brave th' advancing morn.

O! Alice could read passing well,
And she was conning then
Dan Ovid's mazy tale of loves,
And gods, and beasts, and men.

The vassal's speech, his taunting vein,
It thrill'd like venom thro' her brain;

Yet never from the book
She rais'd her head, nor did she deign
The knight a single look.

“ Off, traitor friend ! how dar'st thou fix
Thy wanton gaze on me ?
And why, against my earnest suit,
Does Julian send by thee ?

“ Go, tell thy Lord, that slow is sure :
Fair speed his shafts to-day !
I follow here a stronger lure,
And chase a gentler prey.”

She said : and with a baleful smile
The vassal knight reel'd off—
Like a huge billow from a bark
Toil'd in the deep sea-trough,
That shouldering sideways in mid plunge,
Is travers'd by a flash ;
And staggering onward, leaves the ear
With dull and distant crash.

And Alice sate with troubled mien
A moment ; for the scoff was keen,
And thro' her veins did shiver !
Then rose and donn'd her dress of green,
Her buskins and her quiver.

There stands the flow'ring may-thorn tree !
From thro' the veiling mist you see
The black and shadowy stem ;—
Smit by the sun the mist in glee
Dissolves to lightsome jewelry—
Each blossom hath its gem !

With tear-drop glittering to a smile,
The gay maid on the garden-stile
Mimics the hunter's shout.
"Hip! Florian, hip! To horse, to horse!
Go, bring the palfrey out.

"My Julian's out with all his clan,
And, bonny boy, you wis,
Lord Julian is a hasty man,
Who comes late, comes amiss."

Now Florian was a stripling squire,
A gallant boy of Spain,
That toss'd his head in joy and pride,
Behind his Lady fair to ride,
But blush'd to hold her train.

The huntress is in her dress of green,—
And forth they go; she with her bow,
Her buskins and her quiver!—
The squire—no younger e'er was seen—
With restless arm and laughing een,
He makes his javelin quiver.

And had not Ellen stay'd the race,
And stopp'd to see, a moment's space,
The whole great globe of light
Give the last parting kiss-like touch
To the eastern ridge, it lack'd not much,
They had o'erta'en the knight.

It chanced that up the covert lane,
Where Julian waiting stood,
A neighbour knight prick'd on to join
The huntsmen in the wood.

And with him must Lord Julian go,
Tho' with an anger'd mind :
Betroth'd not wedded to his bride,
In vain he sought, twixt shame and pride,
Excuse to stay behind.

He bit his lip, he wrung his glove,
He look'd around, he look'd above,
But pretext none could find or frame !
Alas ! alas ! and well-a-day !
It grieves me sore to think, to say,
That names so seldom meet with Love,
Yet Love wants courage without a name !

Straight from the forest's skirt the trees
O'er-branching, made an aisle,
Where hermit old might pace and chaunt
As in a minster's pile.

From underneath its leafy screen,
And from the twilight shade,
You pass at once into a green,
A green and lightsome glade.

And there Lord Julian sate on steed ;
Behind him, in a round,
Stood knight and squire, and menial train ;
Against the leash the greyhounds strain ;
The horses paw'd the ground.

When up the alley green, Sir Hugh
Spurr'd in upon the sward,
And mute, without a word, did he
Fall in behind his lord.

Lord Julian turn'd his steed half round.—

“What! doth not Alice deign
To accept your loving convoy, knight?
Or doth she fear our woodland sleight,
And joins us on the plain?”

With stifled tones the knight replied,
And look'd askance on either side,—

“Nay, let the hunt proceed!—
The Lady's message that I bear,
I guess would scantily please your ear,
And less deserves your heed.

“You sent betimes. Not yet unbarr'd
I found the middle door;—
Two stirrers only met my eyes,
Fair Alice, and one more.

“I came unlook'd for: and, it seem'd,
In an unwelcome hour;
And found the daughter of Du Clos
Within the lattic'd bower.

“But hush! the rest may wait. If lost,
No great loss, I divine;
And idle words will better suit
A fair maid's lips than mine.”

“God's wrath! speak out, man,” Julian cried,
O'ermaster'd by the sudden smart;—
And feigning wrath, sharp, blunt, and rude,
The knight his subtle shift pursued.—
“Scowl not at me; command my skill,
To lure your hawk back, if you will,
But not a woman's heart.

“ ‘ Go ! (said she) tell him,—slow is sure ;
Fair speed his shafts to-day !
I follow here a stronger lure,
And chase a gentler prey.’

“ The game, pardie, was full in sight,
That then did, if I saw aright,
The fair dame’s eyes engage ;
For turning, as I took my ways,
I saw them fix’d with steadfast gaze
Full on her wanton page.”

The last word of the traitor knight
It had but entered Julian’s ear,—
From two o’erarching oaks between,
With glist’ning helm-like cap is seen,
Borne on in giddy cheer,

A youth, that ill his steed can guide ;
Yet with reverted face doth ride,
As answering to a voice,
That seems at once to laugh and chide—
“ Not mine, dear mistress,” still he cried,
“ ’Tis this mad filly’s choice.”

With sudden bound, beyond the boy,
See ! see ! that face of hope and joy,
That regal front ! those cheeks aglow !
Thou neededst but the crescent sheen,
A quiver’d Dian to have been,
Thou lovely child of old Du Clos !

Dark as a dream Lord Julian stood,
Swift as a dream, from forth the wood,
Sprang on the plighted Maid !

With fatal aim, and frantic force,
 The shaft was hurl'd!—a lifeless corse,
 Fair Alice from her vaulting horse,
 Lies bleeding on the glade.

THE PICTURE,

OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.



THROUGH weeds and thorns, and matted
 underwood
 I force my way; now climb, and now descend
 O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
 Crushing the purple whorts; while oft unseen,
 Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves,
 The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil
 I know not, ask not whither! A new joy,
 Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
 And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
 Beckons me on, or follows from behind,
 Playmate, or guide! The master-passion quelled,
 I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
 The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,
 Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
 Soar up, and form a melancholy vault
 High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse;
 Here too the love-lorn man, who, sick in soul,
 And of this busy human heart aweary,
 Worships the spirit of unconscious life
 In tree or wild-flower.—Gentle lunatic!

If so he might not wholly cease to be,
He would far rather not be that, he is ;
But would be something, that he knows not of,
In winds or waters, or among the rocks !

But hence, fond wretch ! breathe not contagion here !
No myrtle-walks are these : these are no groves
Where Love dare loiter ! If in sullen mood
He should stray hither, the low stumps shall gore
His dainty feet, the brier and the thorn
Make his plumes haggard. Like a wounded bird
Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,
Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades !
And you, ye Earth-winds ! you that make at morn
The dew-drops quiver on the spiders' webs !
You, O ye wingless Airs ! that creep between
The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,
Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon,
The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed—
Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless damp,
Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
Chase, chase him, all ye Fays, and elfin Gnomes !
With prickles sharper than his darts bemock
His little Godship, making him perforce
Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's back.

This is my hour of triumph ! I can now
With my own fancies play the merry fool,
And laugh away worse folly, being free.
Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine
Clothes as with net-work : here will I couch my limbs,
Close by this river, in this silent shade,
As safe and sacred from the step of man

As an invisible world—unheard, unseen,
And listening only to the pebbly brook
That murmurs with a dead, yet tinkling sound ;
Or to the bees, that in the neighbouring trunk
Make honey-hoards. The breeze, that visits me,
Was never Love's accomplice, never raised
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow,
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek ;
Ne'er played the wanton—never half disclosed
The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distempered youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen-grove
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze ! thou only, if I guess aright,
Liftest the feathers of the robin's breast,
That swells its little breast, so full of song,
Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.
And thou too, desert stream ! no pool of thine,
Though clear as lake in latest summer-eve,
Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
The face, the form divine, the downcast look
Contemplative ! Behold ! her open palm
Presses her cheek and brow ! her elbow rests
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
That leans towards its mirror ! Who erewhile
Had from her countenance turned, or looked by stealth,
(For fear is true love's cruel nurse), he now
With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
E'en as that phantom-world on which he gazed,
But not unheeded gazed : for see, ah ! see,

The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks
The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
Lychnis, and willow-herb, and fox-glove bells :
And suddenly, as one that toys with time,
Scatters them on the pool ! Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth, who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return ! And lo ! he stays :
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror ; and behold
Each wild-flower on the marge inverted there,
And there the half-uprooted tree—but where,
O where the virgin's snowy arm, that leaned
On its bare branch ? He turns, and she is gone !
Homeward she steals through many a woodland maze
Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth !
Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,
Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou ;
Behold'st her shadow still abiding there,
The Naiad of the mirror !

Not to thee,
O wild and desert stream ! belongs this tale :
Gloomy and dark art thou—the crowded firs
Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy bed,
Making thee doleful as a cavern-well :
Save when the shy king-fishers build their nest
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild stream !

This be my chosen haunt—emancipate

From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
I rise and trace its devious course. O lead,
Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.
Lo ! stealing through the canopy of firs,
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
Isle of the river, whose disparted waves
Dart off asunder with an angry sound,
How soon to re-unite ! And see ! they meet,
Each in the other lost and found : and see
Placeless, as spirits, one soft water-sun
Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye !
With its soft neighbourhood of filmy clouds,
The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,
Dimness o'erswum with lustre ! Such the hour
Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds ;
And hark, the noise of a near waterfall !
I pass forth into light—I find myself
Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful
Of forest-trees, the lady of the woods,)
Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock
That overbrows the cataract. How bursts
The landscape on my sight ! Two crescent hills
Fold in behind each other, and so make
A circular vale, and land-locked, as might seem,
With brook and bridge, and grey stone cottages,
Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,
The whortle-berries are bedewed with spray,
Dashed upwards by the furious waterfall.
How solemnly the pendent ivy-mass
Swings in its winnow ; all the air is calm.
The smoke from cottage chimneys, tinged with light,
Rises in columns ; from this house alone,
Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is this ?

That cottage, with its slanting chimney-smoke,
And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
His dear head pillowed on a sleeping dog—
One arm between its fore legs, and the hand
Holds loosely its small handful of wild-flowers,
Unfilleted, and of unequal lengths.
A curious picture, with a master's haste
Sketched on a strip of pinky-silver skin,
Peeled from the birchen bark! Divinest maid!
Yon bark her canvass, and those purple berries
Her pencil! See, the juice is scarcely dried
On the fine skin! She has been newly here;
And lo! yon patch of heath has been her couch—
The pressure still remains! O blessed couch!
For this mayst thou flower early, and the sun,
Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
Upon thy purple bells! O Isabel!
Daughter of genius! stateliest of our maids!
More beautiful than whom Alcæus wooed
The Lesbian woman of immortal song!
O child of genius! stately, beautiful,
And full of love to all, save only me,
And not ungentle e'en to me! My heart,
Why beats it thus? Through yonder coppice-wood
Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straightway
On to her father's house. She is alone!
The night draws on—such ways are hard to hit—
And fit it is I should restore this sketch,
Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I yearn
To keep the relique? 'twill but idly feed
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste!
The picture in my hand which she has left;
She cannot blame me that I followed her:
And I may be her guide the long wood through.

ODE TO TRANQUILLITY.



TRANQUILLITY! thou better name
Than all the family of Fame!
Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age
To low intrigue, or factious rage;

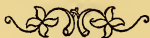
For oh! dear child of thoughtful Truth,
To thee I gave my early youth,
And left the bark, and blest the steadfast shore,
Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me with its roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
On him but seldom, Power divine,
Thy spirit rests! Satiety
And Sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,
Mock the tired worldling. Idle hope
And dire remembrance interlope,
To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind:
The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead
At morning through the accustomed mead;
And in the sultry summer's heat
Will build me up a mossy seat;
And when the gust of Autumn crowds,
And breaks the busy moonlight clouds,
Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart attune,
Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,
To thee I dedicate the whole!
And while within myself I trace
The greatness of some future race,

Aloof with hermit-eye I scan
 The present works of present man—
 A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,
 Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile!



FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER.

A WAR ECLOGUE.

*The Scene a desolated Tract in la Vendée; FAMINE is
 discovered lying on the ground; to her enter
 FIRE and SLAUGHTER.*

Famine.



ISTERS! sisters! who sent you here?

Slau. [to *Fire*.] I will whisper it in her ear.

Fire. No! no! no!

Spirits hear what spirits tell:

'Twill make a holiday in Hell.

No! no! no!

Myself, I named him once below,
 And all the souls, that damned be,
 Leaped up at once in anarchy,
 Clapped their hands and danced for glee.
 They no longer heeded me;
 But laughed to hear Hell's burning rafters
 Unwillingly re-echo laughter!

No! no! no!

Spirits hear what spirits tell:

'Twill make a holiday in Hell!

Fam. Whisper it, sister ! so and so !
In a dark hint, soft and slow.

Slau. Letters four do form his name—
And who sent you ?

Both. The same ! the same !

Slau. He came by stealth, and unlocked my den,
And I have drunk the blood since then
Of thrice three hundred thousand men.

Both. Who bade you do it ?

Slau. The same ! the same !
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried Halloo !
To him alone the praise is due.

Fam. Thanks, sister, thanks ! the men have bled,
Their wives and their children faint for bread.
I stood in a swampy field of battle ;
With bones and skulls I made a rattle,
To frighten the wolf and carrion-crow
And the homeless dog—but they would not go.
So off I flew : for how could I bear
To see them gorge their dainty fare ?
I heard a groan and a peevish squall,
And through the chink of a cottage-wall—
Can you guess what I saw there ?

Both. Whisper it, sister ! in our ear.

Fam. A baby beat its dying mother :
I had starved the one and was starving the other !

Both. Who bade you do it ?

Fam. The same ! the same !
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried, Halloo !
To him alone the praise is due.

Fire. Sisters ! I from Ireland came !
Hedge and corn-fields all on flame,

I triumphed o'er the setting sun !
 And all the while the work was done,
 On as I strode with my huge strides,
 I flung back my head and I held my sides,
 It was so rare a piece of fun
 To see the sweltered cattle run
 With uncouth gallop through the night,
 Scared by the red and noisy light !
 By the light of his own blazing cot
 Was many a naked rebel shot :
 The house-stream met the flame and hissed,
 While crash ! fell in the roof, I wist,
 On some of those old bed-rid nurses,
 That deal in discontent and curses.

Both. Who bade you do it ?

Fire.

The same ! the same !

Letters four do form his name.

He let me loose, and cried Halloo !

To him alone the praise is due.

All. He let us loose, and cried Halloo !

How shall we yield him honour due ?

Fam. Wisdom comes with lack of food.

I'll gnaw, I'll gnaw the multitude,

Till the cup of rage o'erbrim :

They shall seize him and his brood—

Slau. They shall tear him limb from limb !

Fire. O thankless beldames and untrue !

And is this all that you can do

For him, who did so much for you ?

Ninety months he, by my troth !

Hath richly catered for you both ;

And in an hour would you repay

An eight years' work ?—Away ! away !

I alone am faithful ! I

Cling to him everlastingly.

LIMBO.



IS a strange place, this Limbo!—not a Place,
Yet name it so;—where Time and weary Space
Fetter'd from flight, with night-mare sense of
fleeing,

Strive for their last crepuscular half-being;—
Lank Space, and scytheless Time with branny hands
Barren and soundless as the measuring sands,
Not mark'd by flit of Shades,—unmeaning they
As moonlight on the dial of the day!
But that is lovely—looks like human Time,—
An old man with a steady look sublime,
That stops his earthly task to watch the skies;
But he is blind—a statue hath such eyes;—
Yet having moonward turn'd his face by chance,
Gazes the orb with moon-like countenance,
With scant white hairs, with foretop bald and high,
He gazes still,—his eyeless face all eye;—
As 'twere an organ full of silent sight,
His whole face seemeth to rejoice in light!—
Lip touching lip, all moveless, bust and limb—
He seems to gaze at that which seems to gaze on him!

No such sweet sights doth Limbo den immure,
Wall'd round, and made a spirit-jail secure,
By the mere horror of blank Naught-at-all,
Whose circumambience doth these ghosts enthrall.
A lurid thought is growthless, dull Privation,
Yet that is but a Purgatory curse;
Hell knows a fear far worse,
A fear—a future state;—'tis positive Negation!

NE PLUS ULTRA.



SOLE Positive of Night!
 Antipathist of Light!
 Fate's only essence! primal scorpion rod—
 The one permitted opposite of God!—
 Condensed blackness and abysmal storm
 Compacted to one sceptre
 Arms the Grasp enorm—
 The Interceptor—
 The Substance that still casts the shadow Death!—
 The Dragon foul and fell—
 The unrevealable,
 And hidden one, whose breath
 Gives wind and fuel to the fires of Hell!—
 Ah! sole despair
 Of both th' eternities in Heaven!
 Sole interdict of all-bedewing prayer,
 The all-compassionate!
 Save to the Lampads Seven
 Reveal'd to none of all th' Angelic State,
 Save to the Lampads Seven,
 That watch the throne of Heaven!

FROM WALLENSTEIN.



NEVER rudely will I blame his faith
In the might of stars and angels ! 'Tis not
merely

The human being's Pride that peoples space
With life and mystical predominance ;
Since likewise for the stricken heart of Love
This visible nature, and this common world,
Is all too narrow : yea, a deeper import
Lurks in the legend told my infant years
Than lies upon that truth, we live to learn.
For fable is Love's world, his home, his birth-place :
Delightedly dwells he 'mong fays and talismans,
And spirits ; and delightedly believes
Divinities, being himself divine.
The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
The fair humanities of old religion,
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,
That had their haunts in dale, or piny mountain,
Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
Or chasms and wat'ry depths ; all these have vanished ;
They live no longer in the faith of reason !
But still the heart doth need a language, still
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names,
And to yon starry world they now are gone,
Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth
With man as with their friend ; and to the lover
Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky
Shoot influence down : and even at this day
'Tis Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,
And Venus who brings everything that's fair !

HYMN

BEFORE SUN-RISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.



HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star
 In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
 On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
 The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
 Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
 How silently! Around thee and above
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
 An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
 As with a wedge! But when I look again,
 It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
 This habitation from eternity!
 O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
 Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
 Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
 I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
 So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
 Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
 Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
 Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
 Into the mighty vision passing—there
 As in her natural form, swell'd vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
 Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
 Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
 Voice of sweet song! Awake, my Heart, awake!
 Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged Rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came,)
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!

Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds !
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God !

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost !
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest !
Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-storm !
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds !
Ye signs and wonders of the element !
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise !

Thou too, hoar Mount ! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain ! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth !
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
That dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great hierarch ! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN ON
A HEATH.



HIS Sycamore, oft musical with bees,—
Such tents the Patriarchs loved ! O long
unharm'd

May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy

The small round basin, which this jutting stone
Keeps pure from falling leaves ! Long may the Spring,
Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the traveller
With soft and even pulse ! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
Which at the bottom, like a Fairy's page,
As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the Fount.
Here twilight is and coolness : here is moss,
A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.
Thou may'st toil far and find no second tree.
Drink, Pilgrim here ; here rest ! and if thy heart
Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
Thy Spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
Or passing gale or hum of murmuring bees !

THE NIGHTINGALE ;

A CONVERSATION POEM. APRIL, 1798.



O cloud, no relique of the sunken day
 Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip
 Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
 Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge!
 You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
 But hear no murmuring : it flows silently,
 O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
 A balmy night! and though the stars be dim,
 Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
 That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
 A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
 And hark ! the Nightingale begins its song,
 " Most musical, most melancholy" bird !¹
 A melancholy bird ! Oh ! idle thought !
 In nature there is nothing melancholy.
 But some night-wandering man whose heart was pierced
 With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
 Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
 (And so, poor wretch ! filled all things with himself,
 And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
 Of his own sorrow) he, and such as he,
 First named these notes a melancholy strain.
 And many a poet echoes the conceit ;

¹ " *Most musical, most Melancholy.*"] This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description. It is spoken in the character of the melancholy man, and has therefore a dramatic propriety. The author makes this remark, to rescue himself from the charge of having alluded with levity to a line in Milton.

Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
When he had better far have stretched his limbs
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
By sun or moon-light, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his fame forgetful! so his fame
Should share in Nature's immortality,
A venerable thing! and so his song
Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
Be loved like Nature! But 'twill not be so;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still
Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My Friend, and thou, our Sister! we have learnt
A different lore: we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music!

And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew

So many nightingales ; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day ! On moon-lit bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclosed,
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full,
Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade
Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle Maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a Lady vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove)
Glides through the pathways ; she knows all their notes,
That gentle Maid ! and oft a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence ; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps ! And she hath watched
Many a nightingale perched giddily
On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler ! till to-morrow eve,
And you, my friends ! farewell, a short farewell !
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—That strain again !
Full fain it would delay me ! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,
And bid us listen ! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's play-mate. He knows well
The evening-star ; and once, when he awoke
In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream.—)
I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped tears,
Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam ! Well !—
It is a father's tale : But if that Heaven
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy.—Once more, farewell,
Sweet Nightingale ! Once more, my friends ! farewell !

FROST AT MIDNIGHT.



HE frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelp'd by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits

Abstruser musings : save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings on of life,
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not ;
Only that film, which flutter'd on the grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit
By its own moods interprets, everywhere
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O ! how oft,
How oft, at school, with most believing mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
To watch that fluttering stranger ! and as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-tower,
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come !
So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt
Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams !
And so I brooded all the following morn,
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fix'd with mock study on my swimming book :

Save if the door half-opened, and I snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,
For still I hoped to see the stranger's face,
Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
My playmate when we both were clothed alike !

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought !
My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
And in far other scenes ! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But thou, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags : so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great universal Teacher ! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eve-drops fall

Heard only in the trances of the blast,
 Or if the secret ministry of frost
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
 Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

LOVE, HOPE, AND PATIENCE IN EDUCATION.



'ER wayward childhood would'st thou hold
 firm rule,
 And sun thee in the light of happy faces;
 Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be
 thy graces,
 And in thine own heart let them first keep school.
 For as old Atlas on his broad neck places
 Heaven's starry globe, and there sustains it;—so
 Do these upbear the little world below
 Of education,—Patience, Love, and Hope.
 Methinks, I see them group'd in seemly show,
 The straiten'd arms uprais'd, the palms aslope,
 And robes that touching as adown they flow,
 Distinctly blend, like snow emboss'd in snow.
 O part them never! If Hope prostrate lie,
 Love too will sink and die.
 But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive
 From her own life that Hope is yet alive;
 And bending o'er, with soul-transfusing eyes,
 And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
 Woos back the fleeting spirit, and half supplies;—

Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave to
Love.

Yet haply there will come a weary day,
 When overtask'd at length
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
And both supporting does the work of both.





NOTES.

THE BLOSSOMING OF THE SOLITARY DATE-TREE.

PAGE 77.



SEEM to have an indistinct recollection of having read either in one of the ponderous tomes of George of Venice, or in some other compilation from the uninspired Hebrew writers, an apologue or Rabbinical tradition to the following purpose:

While our first parents stood before their offended Maker, and the last words of the sentence were yet sounding in Adam's ear, the guileful false serpent, a counterfeit and a usurper from the beginning, presumptuously took on himself the character of advocate or mediator, and pretending to intercede for Adam, exclaimed: "Nay, Lord, in thy justice, not so! for the Man was the least in fault. Rather let the Woman return at once to the dust, and let Adam remain in this thy Paradise." And the word of the Most High answered Satan: "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. Treacherous Fiend! if with guilt like thine, it had been possible for thee to have the heart of a Man, and to feel the yearning of a human soul for its counterpart, the sentence, which thou now counsellest, should have been inflicted on thyself."

The title of this poem was suggested by a fact mentioned by Linnæus, of a date-tree in a nobleman's garden which year after year had put forth a full show of blossoms, but never produced fruit, till a branch from another date-tree had been conveyed from a distance of some hundred leagues. The first leaf of the MS. from which the poem has been transcribed, and which contained the two or three introductory stanzas, is wanting: and the author has in vain taxed his memory to repair the loss. But a rude draught of the poem contains the substance of the stanzas, and the reader is requested to receive it as the substitute. It is not impossible, that some congenial spirit, whose years do not exceed those of the author, at the time the poem was written, may find a pleasure in restoring the Lament to its original integrity by a reduction of the thoughts to the requisite metre.

THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN.

PAGE 83.

A PROSE composition, one not in metre at least, seems *prima facie* to require explanation or apology. It was written in the year 1798, near Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire (at which place (*sanctum et amabile nomen!* rich by so many associations and recollections) the author had taken up his residence in order to enjoy the society and close neighbourhood of a dear and honoured friend, T. Poole, Esq. The work was to have been written in concert with another, whose name is too venerable within the precincts of genius to be unnecessarily brought into connection with such a trifle, and who was then residing at a small distance from Nether Stowey. The title and subject were suggested by myself, who likewise drew out the scheme and the contents for each of the three books or cantos, of which the work was to consist, and which, the reader is to be informed, was to have

been finished in one night! My partner undertook the first canto; I the second: and which ever had done first, was to set about the third. Almost thirty years have passed by; yet at this moment I cannot without something more than a smile moot the question which of the two things was the more impracticable, for a mind so eminently original to compose another man's thoughts and fancies, or for a taste so austere, pure and simple to imitate the Death of Abel? Methinks I see his grand and noble countenance as at the moment when having despatched my own portion of the task at full finger-speed, I hastened to him with my manuscript—that look of humorous despondency fixed on his almost blank sheet of paper, and then its silent mock-piteous admission of failure struggling with the sense of the exceeding ridiculousness of the whole scheme—which broke up in a laugh: and the Ancient Mariner was written instead.

Years afterward, however, the draft of the plan and proposed incidents, and the portion executed, obtained favour in the eyes of more than one person, whose judgment on a poetic work could not but have weighed with me, even though no parental partiality had been thrown into the same scale, as a make-weight: and I determined on commencing anew, and composing the whole in stanzas, and made some progress in realizing this intention, when adverse gales drove my bark off the “Fortunate Isles” of the Muses: and then other and more momentous interests prompted a different voyage, to firmer anchorage and a securer port. I have in vain tried to recover the lines from the palimpsest tablet of my memory: and I can only offer the introductory stanza, which had been committed to writing for the purpose of procuring a friend's judgment on the metre, as a specimen.

NOTE TO HOMERIC HEXAMETER.

PAGE 88.

WE add in a note exemplifications of other metres given in a "Lesson for a Boy." There is something very touching in this little lesson when read by the light of the after-fate of Derwent Coleridge.

Trōchēē trīps frōm lōng tō shōrt;
 From long to long in solemn sort
 Slōw Spōndēē stālks; strōng fōōt! yet ill able
 Ēvēr tō cōme ūp wīth Dāctŷl trīsŷllāblē.
 Īāmbīcs mārch frōm shōrt tō lōng;—
 Wīth ā lēāp ānd ā bōūnd thē swīft Anāpæsts thrōng;
 One syllable long, with one short at each side,
 Amphībrāchŷs hāstes wīth ā stātely stride;—
 Fīrst ānd lāst bēīng lōng, mīddlē, shōrt, Amphīmācer
 Strīkes hīs thūndērīng hōōfs līke ā prōūd hīgh-brēd Rācer.

If Derwent be innocent, steady, and wise,
 And delight in the things of earth, water, and skies;
 Tender warmth at his heart, with these metres to show it,
 With sound sense in his brains, may make Derwent a poet,—
 May crown him with fame, and must win him the love
 Of his father on earth and his Father above.

My dear, dear child!

Could you stand upon Skiddaw, you would not from its whole
 ridge

See a man who so loves you as your fond S. T. COLERIDGE.



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